

I Stand on Holy Ground, Chapter 6, "I, If I Be Lifted Up"
Examples of Possible Answers to Study Questions

1. What is responsible for the good and the discord that comes into our experience?

Our state of consciousness draws the good and the discord into our experience. This doesn't mean that we should feel any guilt about having discords in life. Instead, we should realize that we have just been ignorant of truth.

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." So we must know the truth. A mind imbued with truth is a law of harmony. In proportion to our degree of illumination, we bring harmony to our body, home, family, purse, community, and ultimately to our entire world. So our work is to move higher and higher in consciousness by knowing the truth.

2. Joel says that to be free of discord and inharmony, we must be in alignment with the laws of God, or the laws of spiritual living as revealed by Jesus Christ and other great spiritual lights. He speaks about "minor" steps and "major" steps that we can take in this regard. What are the minor ones? What are the major ones?

The minor steps that Joel mentions are:

- *Agreeing that there is only one Father and that no man on earth is our father, so that we wipe out of our consciousness racial, religious, and national distinctions. There is only one creative Principle that created this universe in Its own image and likeness, and in our true identity, we are all brothers and sisters.*
- *Praying for the enemy that the spirit of God awaken them so that they, too, may come into the brotherhood of realized souls. We pray that errors such as envy, hate, jealousy, and mad ambition be broken in them, and that the Christ be realized.*
- *Forgiving seventy times seven and practicing forgiveness until we come to the place where we can never be offended again. We examine ourselves to see if we are holding anyone in bondage to his errors, wanting to see him punished. If we are, to the best of our ability, we release the individual.*

Some major, deeper steps that Joel says can be more difficult are:

- *Asking ourselves, "Have I forgiven all the debts that are owed me?" We must set everyone free with the attitude, "You owe me nothing but love, and whatever I can do for you, I do not because of duty, but because it's my way of expressing love."*
- *Going through the teachings of Jesus in the Gospels and noticing any ways in which we have not been practicing them.*
- *When some evil is done to us, do an act of good in return. If we are willing, God's grace will show us how.*

- *“Resist not evil.” Joel says that it can take a long while to fully demonstrate that passage, because it has to be applied to so many different facets of our lives. As an example, Joel talks about how hard it can be to refrain from resisting disease.*

3. Joel tells us that we should have only one concern before we even think of helping the world, or healing, or teaching truth, or blessing mankind. What is that one concern?

Knowing the truth. “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” When we are searching for truth, we haven’t very much to share with the world. So we dedicate ourselves to learning the correct letter of truth, practicing the truth in every life situation, and demonstrating the truth, until we become the very light of truth, and we witness fruitage. Then we have something to share with the world. Then we can be of service to God and man, but even then, we must be patient and silent until those sincerely seeking the truth come to us.

4. How do we become “children of God?”

By praying for the enemy and practicing forgiveness; by abiding in the Word and letting the Word abide in us. Joel says, “You become a child of God when you say, ‘I must love my neighbor as myself, whether my neighbor is a friend or an enemy, whether my neighbor is friend or foe, black or white, rich or poor, up or down. That is when you become a child of God, heir of God, joint heir to all the heavenly riches. . . . The children of God wipe out all barriers, and they say, ‘Heaven forbid that I should hold any man in judgment, criticism, condemnation, when I know that God Himself sends his rain on the just and on the unjust.’” The children of God dwell consciously in the presence of God.

5. Joel says, “There must be “realization for demonstration.” What does this mean?

*God is omnipresent, but God is of no avail until someone has **realized** the Presence. Only when God is realized is the harmony, the peace, the perfection of God manifested, or demonstrated. Realization is not just declaring, “God is omnipresent.” Realization comes when you sit quietly and patiently and wait for the conscious awareness of the Spirit upon you, bringing assurance of the Presence. Realization is attained when we are living the spiritual life, giving up ambition for wealth, for fame, or for personal greatness, in order that we can be an instrument through which Spirit can operate.*

6. Joel says, “If you do not know the nature of God, you will not know how to pray.” What does this mean?

God does not give or withhold. God is the creative and maintaining principle of the universe and all the laws that govern it. The sun rises every morning, the tides flow on schedule, the crops grow, flower, and fruit in their season. Yet no one prays for these things to happen. God IS, whether or not man prays, and whether or not man is good or bad. God governs the universe with no help from man. If we do not understand this as the nature of God, we will pray for God to DO something, and that is “praying amiss.” True prayer is receptive listening in the silence.

We sit in quietness and in confidence and realize, “The God that is the intelligence of this universe, the creative, maintaining, sustaining principle, is good enough for me.” God is

divine love. God knows our need before we do, and it is His good pleasure to give us the kingdom.

- 7. Joel says that you will not find it easy to make the transition from the material sense of life in which there are two powers to the spiritual awareness of life in which God alone is power and there isn't any other power. But he gives us a way that helps us make that shift. What is it?**

"There is only one thing to be done, and that is to live a life of praying without ceasing." This means living life on a different plane, not trying to overcome discords, but living without taking anxious thought, realizing that the spiritual grace of God is our sufficiency.

- We practice the Presence from waking in the morning to retiring at night, quietly and peacefully beholding God in action.*
- We watch our thoughts. If we are entertaining thoughts of envy, malice, hate, bigotry, or resentment, we correct them. We forgive, and we bring ourselves back into alignment with truth.*
- We notice whether we are accepting two powers and experiencing fear, and if we are, we remember that there is only one power. When we have the conviction of one power, there is never anything to fear.*

By doing these things, we experience the grace of living without might or power.

- 8. Joel said that God's good comes to us not by might nor by power. In other words, it does not come with struggle, or strife, or by pleading with God for what is our divine right as children of God. He says that we must learn to accept our good because of the grace of God. What is grace?**

Grace is God's good, God's love, God's peace, harmony, and fulfillment. God's grace IS and is forever flowing freely to all who can accept it. We do not have to earn or deserve God's grace, for "God's rain falls on the just and the unjust," and "Neither do I condemn thee." You can't start the flow of grace by prayer, and you can't stop the flow of grace by being bad. Grace flows continuously. If we are not experiencing grace, it is not because the flow has stopped. It is because we are keeping the flow out by some violation of spiritual law. When we get back into alignment with spiritual law, we will be back in the flow. 'God's grace is my sufficiency in all things.'