

## Optional Study and Practice Suggestions for Recording 471B, “The Pearl”

*This recording is the final session of this class. In the first two sessions, Joel spoke about the foundational principles of the nature of God, the nature of individual being, and the nature of prayer. In the next three sessions, he focused on the stages of spiritual development and the practices that mark those stages. Then he spoke about the ultimate goal of the spiritual journey—the experience of the Absolute. In the next session, he took us deeper into the nature of individual being as “I Am.” This final session is the crown jewel, in which Joel gives “the pearl of great price”—the truth that the I that I am IS God.*

### 1) Summary of the Class

*Note: We always encourage you to write your own summary of the class, because each person will select the points most important to them. However, if it is helpful to you as a quick review, you are welcome to use this summary of recording 471B.*

You will make little progress on the spiritual path until you begin to understand the nature of the word “consciousness.” It is the basis of the entire message of The Infinite Way. So give yourself to the study of the word “consciousness,” but know that the final revelation on consciousness must come from within yourself. Teachers and writings only guide you to go within yourself.

Joel illustrates the point that revelation must come from within by recounting how he discovered the secret of God. He says that when we say that God is love, or intelligence, or law, or life, or Spirit, or Soul, we are using synonyms for God that only testify to the *nature* of God. They do not reveal God Itself. But if you say, “The *nature* of God is love,” you begin to understand that God shows Itself forth as love, care, and protection, and you see that love is an *attribute* of God. Likewise, you can say that God functions as intelligence, because there is a law of like begetting like, and only an intelligence could produce that. So the *nature* of God is intelligence. But that still hasn’t told you what God is. It has only told you another facet of the nature of God. You can say that God functions as law, but again, that just says more about the *nature* and function of God. You still haven’t gotten close to God Itself.

The more words you use, the more you discover that they are just words or thoughts, or theories about God or attributes of God. You are still in the realm of words and thoughts and opinions, and you have not reached the realm of God yet. You are learning more *about* God but learning nothing *of* God Itself. At one point, Joel directs us to notice that we are saying, “I am not learning of God,” which implies that there is I AND God. Is it true that there is an “I” AND there is God? No. I have been *creating* a God with all these synonyms, and that makes me no different from the pagans who invented a God with a white beard on a cloud.

Who is this “I” that is inventing God? The answer is: **I is God**. There are not two. So **there is no other name for God but I**. When this reveals itself to you, you have been given **the pearl of great price**, and you must “go and tell no man.” The pearl has been revealed to you: **I is God**. I, the Knower, is also the Known, and the only reason I can know God is because **I is God**. Otherwise, there would be an “I” knowing something objective to itself, instead of I knowing Itself.

Joel tells us that when I know my Self, I know God, and when you realize your Self, you will not be egotistical. You will have recognized that the Self of me is the Self of you, because God is Self. Therefore, / am Self, and Self is /, and there is no way for / to project a God out here. / is the God! This realization takes away all fear, because if the / of you is God, what can thwart God's will or destroy God's life, God's mind, or God's body? The only question that must be settled in your consciousness is whether or not I am that /. Is there an I other than /? Is there a God up in the sky, floating in the air, or walking on earth?

Joel says that the only God that has ever revealed Itself to him has been revealed through the still, small voice within. So the source of the still, small voice must be within. But there is nothing within me but me. / am the only being that I am. So if I hear a still, small voice, it must come from within the depths of my Self. It must come from the Self of me which I know to be divine.

If I and my Father are one, I must be that One. So I am never knowing God unless I know, "/ in the midst of me am He." / am not the I-man who walks the street brazenly saying, "I am God." / am the /-man who, sacredly and secretly, has received an inner voice saying, "Be still, because / is God. / in the midst of you is God. / am your being, your bread, your meat, your wine, your water. Let that mind be still. Let those fears be still. There are no external powers. / am God."

This pearl must only be shared with those who can receive it sacredly and be trusted with it. The unprepared human mind would want to use it to conquer the world, whereas the prepared soul says, "Oh, / am God. I have all that I want or need. The world's baubles do not interest me." You can't be God and still be interested in name, fame, or fortune. These will come to you, but by that time you won't value them. You will know that you of your own self didn't attain them.

The moment you stop chasing God or anything else, it chases you. All you have to do is be still and let it catch up to you. Why? Because it is already in the midst of you. You are running around outside yourself, physically or mentally, trying to find something that is already within you, within your Self. But you cannot find your Self unless you get quiet. You will not find your Self while you are searching in your mind, or in holy temples, or in holy cities, because "**That which I am seeking, I already am.**"

You will never realize this until you stop the search, become still, know that / am God, and **rest** in that. Do not look to see what you can do, or what you can get, or what you can be with that knowledge. Be satisfied that you have found the pearl of great price, and never show it to anyone but a connoisseur of pearls. With the realization that / am God, you never have to search your mind for a truth for any reason, because / am the truth. All you have to do is rest, and you will find that God is already in action.

*Where* are you? You know that you are not in your body, and you know that you are Omnipresence. Before this class, you said that *God* is Omnipresence. Then what were you? Once again, you had God AND you. But now, you know that / am Omnipresence, and therefore, / is wherever you are. Step by step in this class, you have come to drop the word "God" for the word /. When you started this class, there was an "I" and a God, and there was "I" searching for God, searching for Truth. And, you would say that **God** is Omniscience. Once again, you had God AND you. But now you know that / is Omniscience; that I and my Father are **one**; and that the mind that was in Christ Jesus is my mind.

Now, *what* am I? What am I made of? What constitutes the / that I am? In your meditations, you will perceive that you couldn't know anything without being conscious, and you couldn't be conscious if you weren't consciousness. So / am consciousness. Said differently,

“Consciousness is what *I* am.” But that will only mean something to you when you have the **realization** of it. You wouldn’t even hear a word of the class without the Consciousness which you are. And even if you did hear the class, it would be no good to you if you didn’t understand it. So understanding must be a faculty of the Consciousness which you are. But even if you could understand the class intellectually, but you couldn’t spiritually discern it, it would be no good to you. Therefore, **spiritual discernment** must also be a faculty of Consciousness.

You are Consciousness. You have the five senses, but we should refer to them as the five *physical* senses, because really, there is only one sense—Consciousness. Even when I say that I can be conscious of you through the five senses, I’m really just saying that I am conscious of you. People who are deaf and blind are conscious of others, so there is an activity of consciousness separate and apart from sight or sound or the other physical senses.

Consciousness is **what** *I* am, and because I and the Father are one, that Consciousness is divine Consciousness, spiritual Consciousness. I can lower my *state* of consciousness by entertaining good and evil, or by accepting mental and material powers, and I can lower it all the way down into mortality. But to maintain myself as *spiritual* Consciousness individualized, I must hold myself at the level of no power. I do not exercise any powers, and no one exercises any powers over me. *I am Being. I am Consciousness. I am Spirit. I am Omniscience. I am Omnipresence. I am Omnipotence.* But I don’t have to *exercise* powers. *I am* powers, the powers that do not function as power—just the power of Being. If I realize that *I* is God, I will show forth the divine qualities and nature of that which *I* am.

Question: Since the *I* that I am is God, life eternal, the same yesterday, today, and forever, is age the belief in two powers?

It is not only the belief in two powers; it is the belief in two selfhoods. If you realize that *I* is God, there can be no question of age, because *I* am immortality. There is only the *belief* of age, and that belief can operate only when I believe that there is an “I” AND God. God is expressed as individual being, and *I* am that Being. *I*, the Father, and *I*, the Son are one, and all that *I*, the Father is, *I*, the Son, am. If we understood this, age would be removed from the human scene. When you are consciously attuned to the realization of your true identity, and you know that *I* is God, then you should begin to shed some of the manifestations of age.

[Joel resumes the class.] From the beginning of time, there has been only one spiritual teacher. The first teacher whose identity had its origin in *I*, manifested under the name Krishna, which is a Sanskrit name with the same meaning as “Christ” in Greek. In time, the full and complete consciousness which *I* am became the consciousness of an individual identified as a teacher, which in turn became the consciousness of one identified as a student, who later became the teacher, and so on down the long line of teachers that included Lao Tzu, Buddha, Jesus, John, and Paul. They all had that same mind that manifested individually as the original teacher, and that same mind has come down from teacher to teacher. This will continue until the end of time, which means the end of human consciousness, when every individual on the face of the globe will have the fully awakened consciousness of the teacher.

As long as you have an “I” seeking God, you have not come home. Only when you realize **I IS God**, are you at home in Him and at peace, for when *I* and the Father are one, I have nothing to be disturbed about, nothing to fear, nothing to hate, nothing to resent. *I* and my Father are one, and you can declare that within yourself. All that the Father hath is mine, and the *I* within me is come that I might have life and have it more abundantly.

I do not have to use truth to attain anything. I abide in truth in the center of my being, in quietness and in stillness. Be still and know that **I am God**. Rest in that and be at peace. There is nothing else to know or do. Then, when you have something to do, get up and do it, and when you can, return and be at peace within Me. Find that / that you are. Although / might take different forms or speak different languages in different so-called lifetimes, there never can be a loss of identity, because **God is my identity**. Infinite Being is my identity, and that identity is individualized permanently AS me. That is the pearl of great price.

## 2) **Optional Study and Practice**

### *On the Subject of Consciousness*

At the beginning of this session, Joel says:

*Very little progress will be made by you or by anyone else on the spiritual path until you commence to understand the nature of the word "consciousness." The entire message of The Infinite Way is based on that one word. Everything else that's taught in The Infinite Way, or revealed or shown forth in The Infinite Way, is just the unfolding, or revelation of consciousness. Therefore, you will be playing around with effect unless you can give yourself to the study of the word "consciousness," and while it may be a little help to look it up in a dictionary, and while it may be a little more help to read the passages in The Infinite Way writings on the subject of consciousness, I can tell you in advance that you will not get the final answer either from the dictionary or from The Infinite Way writings.*

*The final answer on the subject of consciousness will have to come from within yourself. I can only be a guide, and the writings can only be a guide, to get you back within yourself.*

Joel is very direct in saying, "The entire message of the Infinite Way is based on that one word." Given that, it certainly behooves us to look at where we are in our present understanding and realization with respect to "consciousness."

If you want to explore the topic of consciousness in the Infinite Way writings, the [search tool](#) can be extremely helpful. But as Joel says, while that may be a little help, you will not get the final answer there. Ultimately, the revelation about consciousness must come from within, and that means quiet time spent in contemplation and meditation until realization dawns.

In balancing between reading / listening to recordings and contemplating / meditating, we suggest that you tip the balance in the direction of contemplating / meditating to deepen your experience of consciousness.

### *The Pearl of Great Price*

Joel identifies the pearl of great price as the revelation that **I is God**. This is a MOMENTOUS revelation that by all rights would astonish us. But we might not see it that way, because we may have heard or read those words many times. However, while we might know the words and understand them intellectually, here again words and intellectual understanding are only a ramp to realization. As Joel says, we must take this pearl within and listen in quietness, and in confidence that realization will come. Such deep reflection seems the appropriate practice as we study this very profound class session.

If you would like to have an additional resource that can provide starters for contemplation as well as ways to practice living the truth that “I is God,” we suggest Chapter 4, “The Infinite Nature of Individual Being,” in *Practicing the Presence*.

In that chapter, Joel enriches the teaching on Oneness that he gives in our current study recording. For example, he speaks about what Oneness means in the context of health and disease:

*We must die to every suggestion that we are or have something of ourselves separate and apart from God. We must die to the belief of health, just as we must die to the belief of disease. Spiritually, there is no disease and there is no health, because we are or have nothing of our own. To suffer from disease or to enjoy good health is to have something of our own. God has neither health nor disease; God is Spirit, and all that we can possibly have is the Spirit of God.*

*We rise above this pair of opposites—health and disease—as we realize that there is no selfhood apart from God. The only thing that we can possess is what God possesses. God’s selfhood is the only Selfhood—neither rich nor poor, neither sick nor well, neither young nor old, and neither live nor dead. It is a state of immortality, eternal being, unchanging, but nevertheless, infinite in its forms and appearances. To acknowledge no selfhood apart from God is the meaning of the Master’s command to deny oneself. We should deny that we, of ourselves, have any qualities, character, strength, health, wealth, wisdom, glory, or potentialities. It is our inner Selfhood, God, which appears outwardly as you or as me.*

Also, Joel gives several beautiful passages for contemplation in that chapter, such as:

*I am infinite; I am eternal; I am immortal—not in and of myself, separate and apart from God, but because God is the life and substance of my being. Infinity is the quantity, and perfection, the quality of being.*

*The Word is made flesh; all flesh is formed of the Word of God. My body, therefore, is the perfect Word of God made flesh, made manifest. My body, being of the essence and substance of God, God-governed, can embody only the activity, harmony, grace, joy, and beauty of God. Nothing external can affect the perfection of my body, whether it is in the form of food, germs, or other people’s thoughts. Nothing foreign to God can enter to defile it or make a lie.*

While our study recording is itself replete with ideas for contemplation, it can be helpful to have something in print (paper or electronic) to draw from as well. This chapter in *Practicing the Presence* provides just that.