

REALITY AND ILLUSION

Optional Study and Practice Suggestions for Recording 17B, “Spiritual Healing, Part 2”

*In the first session of this study program, Joel taught the meaning of Reality and unreality, or Reality and illusion. In the second session, he explained that what appears to be good is just as unreal as what appears to be evil. He emphasized that **what** we behold is not the illusion. Our **sense** of what we behold, our **perception** of it, is the illusion, and that an illusion is always in the mind; it is never externalized.*

In the third session, Joel connected illusion with the spiritual principle of one power, pointing out that if there is only one infinite power, there can be no other power, so what is perceived as another power must be an illusion. He spoke about the practice of protective work and explained the role of the mind in forming illusions.

*In this session, Joel relates Reality and illusion to the healing work, emphasizing that to be effective, we must come to the realization that God is the only **Reality**, and that sin, disease, death, lack, limitation, and any other appearances must become as **unreal** to us as the water on the desert.*

Key Points in the Lesson

It can be helpful to reflect on some of the key points in the lesson.

- Disease, sin, and death itself, must become **unreal** in our consciousness.
- The world of disease has become a real world in human consciousness. It is so deeply rooted that even those who give their time and attention exclusively to healing find some difficulty in the work.
- Death is the “last enemy that shall be overcome” because it has the deepest belief attached to it. For a long time, consumption, cancer, and heart trouble have given much difficulty in the healing work because of the **depth of belief** in them. But they do not present difficulty to the individual who does not think about a physical healing but looks through the appearance to the kingdom of God and beholds the living Christ as the life of the individual.
- As long as disease is a reality to you, and you believe that disease must run some physical pattern, you are not in spiritual healing.
- Healings do not take place through the intervention of some God, but through a state of consciousness in which God and the creations of God are the **Reality**, and sin, disease, and death **have no reality**—no cause, no substance, no law. Since God is infinite Spirit, the universe, including man, is infinitely and eternally spiritual. Destruction is no part of God’s kingdom.

- We do not battle an appearance or try to get rid of it. Our attitude toward it is the same as our attitude toward the water on the desert after we have discovered that it is **an illusion**. In not resisting the so-called evil, it is overcome. Whatever you behold by seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, or smelling, learn to see it as the water on the desert, as a mirage, **an illusion**, as **an unreality**. Then you will translate illness into health.
- The activity of Truth in your consciousness is the healing agency.
- The ability to discern the **Reality** of an individual brings out healings. Through this discernment, the individual is lifted in consciousness right out of human selfhood. They respond to the practitioner's vision of the Christ in them and rise up to meet some measure of what the practitioner beholds. So, behold the Christ in every individual. Look **through** them, not at them.
- In your meditation, prayer, or contemplation, do not take human beings into your thought. That prevents your seeing the spiritual reality. Turn your thought to God. All you have to do is be conscious of God's presence, and God's presence does the work. You do not have to think of those whom you would like to benefit.
- Turn your attention to God until you receive that inner impulse that assures you of God's presence. Then trust It to do what is called "healing work." You won't "heal" anybody. The **illusion** will be dispelled, and **Reality** will be revealed.
- On the physical level of life, there is such a thing as infection and contagion, but in Reality, there is not. As real as infectious and contagious diseases may seem on the human plane, once they are touched by the Spirit, by the recognition of their **unreality**, they are gone. It is the same with the belief that there is a mental cause for physical disease. In The Infinite Way, we do not accept a mental cause for a physical disease any more than we accept the premise of a germ disease.
- We take all sin, disease, and false appetites—regardless of their name or nature—and include them in the same category as the water on the desert. The water on the desert has no cause. Why? There is no water there! The entire picture is **illusory**.
- Our attitude toward all forms of discord, regardless of what form you see, hear, taste, touch, or smell, must be the instant recognition that God is the only **Reality**, the **only** creative and causative principle of the universe. So what could have created the water on the desert or the snake in the rope? Nothing! The water and the snake never had existence as Reality. They exist only as an **illusory** sense, or a misperception, a mirage.
- Never come down to the level of the sin, disease, death, lack, or limitation, or to establish a cause for it, or try to remove, improve, or reduce it.
- An **illusion** is an **illusion**, whether you call it a corn or a cancer, and the sooner you get used to the idea that one is equally nothingness with the other, the sooner will you bring forth healing works.
- Give your time to two points: 1) that which is **Reality**, and 2) the constant recognition that if you see it, hear it, taste it, touch it, or smell it, it is not according to God's law, and is not maintained or sustained.

- In the face of any appearance, turn your thoughts to the idea of **God and Reality** and listen, being ever alert to the still, small voice until that divine impulse comes that assures you God is on the field. Then the healings take place.
- We only heal in the degree of our God realization, and that God realization is more than a healing agency. It is a presence that goes before us to make the crooked places straight, to prepare mansions for us, to make our whole human existence harmonious, joyous, and fruitful.
- God living, spiritual living, is the only way to ensure permanent harmonious living, and that means a life of giving, not getting, a life of sharing, a life of outpouring.

Related Practice

We do not have to be a practitioner or have people coming to us for help to practice what Joel has taught in this lesson. We can simply apply his recommendations in our everyday life:

- Behold the Christ in every individual. Look **through** them, not **at** them.
- In your meditation, prayer, or contemplation, do not take human beings into your thought. Turn your thought to God. Be conscious of God's presence, and God's presence does the work. Turn your attention to God until you receive that inner impulse that assures you of God's presence. Then trust It to do the work.
- Your attitude toward all forms of discord, regardless of what form you see, hear, taste, touch, or smell, must be the instant recognition that since God is the only creative principle of the universe, nothing has created this error. It exists only as a false sense, or an **illusory** sense, or a misperception. It is a mirage. Never come down to the level of the sin, disease, death, lack, or limitation, or to establish a cause for it, or try to remove, improve, or reduce it. It does not exist as **Reality**.
- Turn from the appearance and turn your thoughts to the idea of **God and Reality** and listen, being ever alert to the still, small voice until you have the assurance that God is on the field.
- Give your time to the constant recognition of two things: 1) That which is **Reality**, and 2) If you see it, hear it, taste it, touch it, or smell it, it is not according to God's law, is not maintained or sustained, and has **no reality**.
- You are in spiritual living when your life is one of giving, sharing, and outpouring.

Supplementary Recording

In preparing for this study program, we reviewed several classes in which Joel gives excellent presentations about reality and illusion, but they are intermixed with other topics. We said that from time to time, we would post the best of these as additional study offerings, so that you will have the opportunity to hear them. **Recording 17A, titled "Spiritual Healing,"** is the class that

immediately preceded our current study class, and is one of the recordings that has a wonderful section on reality and illusion.

Certainly, you are welcome to listen to the entire class, but the section on reality and illusion begins at **22 minutes, 3 seconds**. To get to that place on the recording, simply click on the slider bar until you reach **22:03**.

The supplementary recording is on the [same page as Recording 17B](#). Simply scroll down the page to find it.

To hear recording 17A by telephone, call **1-641-715-3900** and enter **462870#**.

Recording 17A was used as source material for:

- Chapter 4, "The Language of Spiritual Healing," in *The Art of Spiritual Healing*
- Chapter 9, "The Mystic and Healing," in *Awakening Mystical Consciousness*
- Chapter 5, "Love Thy Neighbor," in *Practicing the Presence*.

Recommended Reading for the Study Program

The recommended reading list is for the entire study program was given at the end of the [Optional Study material for Session 1](#).