

Optional Study and Practice Suggestions for Chapter 7, “Concepts or Is?” in *Awakening Mystical Consciousness*

What is the definition of concept? The dictionaries define concept as an abstract idea, a mental representation that exists in the mind. A concept is a symbol of something, not the thing itself.

Key Points and Practices in the Chapter

Joel gives us several key points in this chapter as well as ways to put them into practice. Several of these are given below. While you might want to review all of them, it's probably most helpful to just choose one that resonates with you and work with just that one until you “have it.” Then choose another and work with that one until you feel complete with it, and so on.

- **Key Point: All power is in God. There is no power in concepts.**
- **Practice: Consciously withdraw power from concepts of forms, persons, and conditions.**

Joel says:

“Look any form of error right in the eye—any form, no matter how ugly its appearance or how nasty it is. Look right straight at it with the conviction, ‘You have no power. The power is in the God who directs you, moves you, is your mind, is your Soul, is your Spirit, gave you life, and gave you mind.’ Look at a condition and ask, ‘Where did you come from? You are an effect; you are not a cause. Something produced you. Whatever produced you is the power. And what could have produced you if God made all that was made, and nothing was made except what God made?’”

“Even when you are looking at what the world calls disease, you are not looking at disease any more than you are looking at water when you see the water on the desert. You are looking at an image, a mirage, an illusion, an appearance that has no power. It is in that realization that healing takes place—not in denying it, turning away from it, or trying to rise above it, but in looking right at it and saying, ‘God made all that was made, and all that God made is good. Anything God did not make was not made. So whatever you are, you have no power.’”

“What you see, hear, taste, touch, and smell is not God’s creation; it is a concept of God’s creation. There is no power in it, except the power belief gives it. There is in reality no power in anything you can think about, see, hear, taste, touch, or smell. All power is in God. **As you persist in that as an activity of consciousness day in and day out, it becomes a matter of conviction.**”

- **Key Point: No person or thing is good or bad. It has no good power, and it has no bad power, because all power is in God.**

- **Practice: “Judge not by appearances; judge righteous judgment.”**

Joel says:

“Do not look at what appears to be a good condition and judge it to be good, because it is not. Its only goodness is in God. Do not look at any evil and call it evil, because that is judging only by appearances. You have no knowledge of what lies behind appearances, so it is a matter of **training yourself to be able to look at human appearances of both good and evil and say, ‘Neither do I judge you. Neither do I declare you to be good or evil.** I will say you must be spiritual because God created all that is, and God is Spirit.”

“If we want to judge righteous judgment, the truth is this: God is life, so life is eternal. . . . If I were to say you are in good health or in bad health today, or you have integrity or you do not have integrity today, I would be judging by appearances. I do not know the reality of you. I know only the appearance you are presenting. By **withholding judgment**, by neither judging nor condemning you, I realize I know nothing about you **except that you are God appearing as individual being**. I do not know if you are good or bad, sick or well; but I know you are God appearing, and on that I stand. . . . God constitutes your being. I cannot see that with my eyes. With my eyes, I can judge only by appearances. . . . You are Spirit, but I do not know what Spirit is, so I am not engaging in any judgment. **I am just making the declaration of IS.** . . . That is just stating the truth. The moment I qualify that and say you are good, bad, rich, poor, healthy, sick, young, or old, I am in the realm of judgment, of concepts, and of appearances.”

- **Key Point: Everything that exists on earth is a concept, and I can have dominion over my concepts.**
- **Practice: Take dominion over your concepts.**

The man who was made in God’s image and likeness is the man who was given dominion. The human being, mortal man, material man, was never given dominion. You are only the image and likeness of God when you **stop having concepts**; when you stop having opinions or beliefs about this universe, when you **stop thinking about appearances**, when you sit back and say: **“Speak Lord, thy servant heareth.”**

Joel says:

“Because you really are God appearing as individual being, I have no control over you. But if I am entertaining a human concept about you as being young or old, rich or poor, sick or well, **I can have dominion over that concept of you**, and the moment I have attained dominion over my **concept** of you, I behold you as you are, and I am satisfied with that likeness. *You* have not been changed, because you were the child of God all the time. All that has changed is my **concept** of you, and that is what constitutes healing.

“Judging righteous judgment gives you dominion over your concept. Righteous judgment is understanding that God is the reality of individual being. . . . You have withdrawn

judgment. Now you know who the individual is: Christ, the child of God. **This is having dominion over your concept.**

“The concept of disease is that even insignificant ailments can become serious or fatal. The concept of germs is that they are carriers of infection or contagion. Now **exercise your dominion** and say, ‘Wait a minute! Let’s look at these little fellows. Who made you? If you were made at all, God made you. If you have any life at all, it is God-life. If you have any intelligence at all, it is God-intelligence. You have no power. You are an effect; you are a **concept**. I am not going to judge by appearances: **I am going to judge righteous judgment.**’ And what is righteous judgment? All power is in God. You have done nothing to the germ; you have exercised your dominion over the **concept** of germs.”

- **Key Point: We have dominion over our concepts; we do not have dominion over the material appearance.**
- **Practice: Refrain from trying to change an appearance. Work within.**

Joel says:

“Do not try to make it rain or make the sun shine out here; do not try to make somebody well out here; do not try to get somebody employed out here. Whatever is to happen **must happen inside your own being, and this change is brought about by your having dominion over your concepts.** The moment you have a concept and somewhere in it you find something good or evil, you must work to come to a place where you **withdraw your concepts of good and evil.** Do not try to change evil into good because you will just have a different concept; and tomorrow, next week, or next month it will be back on the evil side again. Do not be happy with a good appearance because some day it will fool you and change to a bad appearance. If you look at a thing and see it as evil, your natural reaction is to want to see it as good. **What you must do is look at it and not see it as good but see it as Spirit, neither good nor bad.**

- **Key Point: Everything that exists as visible form is an effect. Your body is an effect, and an effect has no power.**
- **Practice: Place your body, its organs and functions, under the government of God.**

Joel says:

“If you accept the belief that your body is subject to your control—your whims or personal desires—you will sometimes have a pure body and sometimes a sinful one, sometimes a healthy one and sometimes a sick one, sometimes a young one and sometimes an old one. But **if you recognize that all power is God-power operating as your consciousness, your body will be subject only to God,** divine Intelligence; and it will be God-governed and maintained.

“Think of your heart. It cannot stop or start itself. There is Something that acts upon it and makes it function. That Something we call God. The minute you believe you have power to make your heart start or stop, your heart will fluctuate in accordance with your desires of any given moment. Instead of believing that, **give your heart back to God and do the same thing with all the rest of the organs and functions of your body.** Understand that God made you in His image and likeness and that your body is the temple of the living God. It is God-governed and God-controlled.”

- **Key Point: You will not be free from anything or anybody, but you will be free the very minute you know there never was power in a condition, a circumstance, or a person.**
- **Practice: Never try to become free FROM anything.**

Joel says:

“Never try to become free **from** anyone or anything. . . . When you are free from the mirage on the desert, you have not become free from water **because there was no water there.** . . . When you discover you are free from person or condition; it is not really true, because **there never was a menacing or dangerous person or condition there.** You are free now from a mirage, from a belief that there is a power, a person, or a presence outside of God.

“You are not separate and apart from God and, through this work, going to get back to God. Through this work, you are going to **awaken out of the dream that there can be any separation.** If you have been dreaming you are drowning in the ocean, awakening does not take the water away from you; and it does not take you out of the ocean. It reveals to you that you are in bed. So this work never takes you out of sin, disease, or lack. It wakes you up, and then you look around and realize you are in heaven. You have been there all the time, dreaming you were in hell.

“As long as you are seeing a person or a condition as having power and are judging good and evil, you are in the dream. The moment you can withdraw your judgment and realize, ‘You are neither good nor evil; you are neither dead nor alive; you are neither rich nor poor: you are Spirit,’ you are waking up, out of the dream, to the mystical consciousness of oneness.”

- **Key Point: Don’t be among those who know truth. Be satisfied to let truth know itself in you. Recognize your own nothingness.**
- **Practice: Let what IS reveal itself to you.**

Joel says:

“Turn within and **let** God’s understanding be revealed to you. ‘Something is here. Now, Father, You define it.’ . . . Spiritual healing consists of being able to face the world without an opinion of good or evil, retiring within and asking, ‘Father, what is this?’ Then the Father may remind you, ‘This is my beloved child in whom I am well pleased.’ Or the Father will say, ‘This is the presence of God;’ ‘This is the power of God;’ or ‘This is

nothing separate and apart from God.' It does not always come in words like that, but it comes in the conviction or awareness of the omnipresence of God and God alone. . . .

"God may occasionally speak to you in an audible voice, but that is rare. Most of the time it comes as a conviction, and you abide in the conviction that all is well. This comes with your ability to have no labels as to good or evil. You cannot judge righteous judgment because righteous judgment comes from God, and it can come **only in the degree that you are listening**. In your inner silence, you must be listening to God, and you will either hear audibly, feel, sense, or become aware of God, and that is all that is necessary.

"Only **be careful that you do not prejudge something as evil and then turn to God for help**. God is omnipresent, so there is not use in going to God. . . . A basic principle of The Infinite Way is found in the word IS. God is; harmony is; life is; love is; peace is; joy is; power is; dominion is because God is. God is infinite, omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient. Do not turn to God for anything. **Be still and let God reveal Itself within you.**"

Related Recordings

In our study program "Reality and Illusion," we used recording 497B, titled "Reality and Concepts." That class is closely related to the topics in our study chapter, Chapter 7 in *Awakening Mystical Consciousness*. We have re-posted recording 497B, should you wish to hear it again. The recording is posted on the same page as recording 95B, which is the recording associated with Chapter 7.

You can find a summary of the lesson on recording 497B [here](#).

Related Reading

The chapter "The New Horizon" in *The Infinite Way* is an excellent complement to this chapter on concepts. It is a short chapter and well worth a review.

Speaking about "The New Horizon," Joel said, "For the serious student, the most important chapter in The Infinite Way is 'The New Horizon,' because in it can be found the explanation of the reinterpretation of what you behold. In other words, this chapter explains clearly that the entire human picture is mesmeric suggestion, and it is this suggestion of a selfhood apart from God that you are called upon to reinterpret." (~ *Conscious Union with God, Chapter 4, "The Nature of Error."*)

Related Bible Quotations

In light of the lessons in this chapter, these Bible quotes might take on a deeper meaning, and you might want to use them for contemplation:

- "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." (John 19:11)
- "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (John 7:24)

- “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” (John 1:3).
- “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Corinthians 2:14)
- “Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth.” (1 Samuel 3:9)
- “Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.” (Matthew 19:17)
- “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:16)
- “Neither do I condemn thee.” (John 8:11)