

Optional Study and Practice for The Eight Most Important Chapters, Revisited
Session 9: “The Relationship of Oneness,” from *The Art of Spiritual Healing*
Recording 506B: “The Spiritual Bond”

What Joel Said About This Chapter

Joel mentions this chapter in many of his classes, saying that it is the chapter that he recommends for understanding how to have harmonious relationships; how to work out problems of human relationships. We provided one of his quotes about this chapter in the study material for Session 8. Here are a few more:

- “One of the most fascinating subjects that will ever come up in your experience, in your spiritual life, will be that of human relationships; that is, your relationships within your family, your relationships within your community, your relationships within your business, and ultimately as a citizen of the world. Therefore, sooner or later, you will have to know the specific, spiritual truth about relationships.

“Now, my experience in that direction will be found summed up in the chapter ‘Love Thy Neighbor,’ in the book *Practicing the Presence*, and in the chapter ‘**Relationship of Oneness**’ in *The Art of Spiritual Healing*, and just briefly, it goes like this: Since there is but one Selfhood, one infinite, divine Self, one Life, one Mind, one Being, the *I* or Selfhood of me is the *I* or Selfhood of you, of every member of my family, of every member of my business, of every member of my community. So that what I do unto you, I am doing unto myself, and all of my conduct has to be based on that. Any injustice I do to another is done unto me, for there is but one me. There is but one *I*. There is but one divine Self, and that is your Self, and the love that I can express is being expressed unto me. It might seem that I am doing it unto you, but in the end, it is coming back unto me, because there is a spiritual law which says, ‘Cast thy bread upon the waters.’”¹

- “Now anyone at all, a student especially, who is interested in working out their own human relationships on a spiritual basis, or is interested in helping others work out theirs, can do no better than to take those two chapters (‘Love Thy Neighbor’ and ‘**The Relationship of Oneness**’) for study, because they embrace the principles which, when you are giving help, you have to take into your silent meditation.

In other words, when I am asked for help on these relationships, and I sit down to meditate, I immediately begin to remember, ‘God is the only Selfhood. Therefore we don’t have two people in this relationship, we have only one—God, infinite Selfhood, appearing as two, but still only one.’ God, within Itself, even when appearing infinitely, has no disagreement with Itself, or it would soon be tearing Itself to pieces, and there would be no God left. God is immortal and eternal. Therefore God has within itself no disagreement. God is infinite Selfhood, your selfhood and mine. Therefore, there are not

¹ Recording 302B, “Meditations,” from the 1960 Los Angeles Closed Class.

two of us. Therefore, there can't be disagreement. There cannot be interests opposed to each other, for the only interest there is, is the interest of God expressing Itself.”²

- “Now, when you come to working out problems of human relationships—it can be family, marital, parental; it can be business, human relationships in business or art or profession, public—you will find that if you will refer to the chapter ‘**Relationship of Oneness**’ in *The Art of Spiritual Healing* or if you will refer to the chapter ‘Love Thy Neighbor’ in *Practicing the Presence*, you will have all of these principles that have to do with relationship, and they’re all based on the secret of *I*. I am you, and what I do unto you, I do unto me. And therefore, when we have problems of human relationships, we have got to work from the basis, “I am you.” Then you’ll find out how quickly these problems will be solved.”³
- “In the book *Practicing the Presence* there is a chapter, ‘Love Thy Neighbor,’ and in *The Art of Spiritual Healing* there is a chapter, ‘**Relationship of Oneness.**’ Now these two chapters contain the entire story of right human relationships, how to establish them and how to maintain them. It’s all embodied in those two chapters, and anyone who would make a practice of those two chapters for any length of time at all, some for a shorter while and others longer, will find that they can develop harmonious relationships.”⁴

The Relationship of Oneness

In *The Infinite Way*, the “relationship of oneness” has two aspects: our oneness with God, and our oneness with each other. These two aspects are woven together in this study chapter, which teaches that it is by virtue of our oneness with God that we are one with each other.

The Truth of Oneness is the Basis for Harmonious Relationships

In this chapter, Joel explains that your world, which includes your relationships, is an out-picturing of your consciousness. When your consciousness is imbued with truth, it becomes a law of harmony unto everything in your world and makes everything concerning you reflect the harmony of your consciousness. When there is an absence of truth in your consciousness; when you accept world values and beliefs; appearances, discords, and inharmony claim to be present, and your world reflects the chance and luck of human beliefs. Your awareness of truth is the law unto your world, but your ignorance of truth is also a law unto your world. So to have harmonious relationships, the truth of oneness must be active in consciousness.

How to Handle Relationships

Joel addresses several types and several aspects of human relationships, and he teaches us how to handle them. One way to highlight these major points is to reframe the content of the chapter into a question-and-answer format, which is given below.

² Recording 296A, “The Practice of Specific Principles,” from the 1959 Chicago Open Class.

³ Recording 377B, “The Nature of *I* and Secrecy,” from the 1960 Melbourne Closed Class.

⁴ Recording 383A, “Healing Principles of *The Infinite Way*,” from the 1960 Auckland Closed Class.

How do I establish oneness with others?

Any group of people will present a variety of appearances—old, young, healthy, sick, rich, poor, tall, short, thin, stout, and so on. To feel a sense of oneness with any other person, first you must make your contact with the Spirit, or Father, within you and establish your own oneness with God. Then, dwelling in that oneness, you can discern your oneness with every other individual. How?

As you look “through” the appearance to the God-being of any individual, you recognize that God is the animating principle of every individual. God is the mind of every person; God is the intelligence expressing as individual being. Since God is infinite love, God is the love of individual being, and when an individual realizes that they are filled with the love which is God, that individual cannot be used as an instrument for hate, envy, jealousy, or malice. As you attain this altitude of oneness, you are lifted above personalities into the realm of pure being.

Even if misunderstandings occur between you and another, recognize that they are appearances. Right where that appearance of misunderstanding seems to be, God is, and God is always in agreement with Itself. Realize that you are dealing only with God, and not with persons, beliefs, or conditions.

When you hold to the realization of God as the real entity or identity, the real being of every individual, and you recognize God as the only law, the only substance, the only cause, the only effect, then what we call healing, which is the revealing of spiritual reality, can take place.

To ensure harmony, never leave the realm of God or come down to the level of person, condition, or circumstance. Never take any human condition into consideration. Stay in the realm of God; stay in the relationship of oneness with God and oneness with each other.

How do I handle a relationship with someone who has power over me?

When a person or circumstance claims to have power over you, you must take your stand and realize: “My being is in Christ, and as long as I maintain my being in Christ, only the Christ can operate in my consciousness, which is the one consciousness, the consciousness of every person in the world.”

In other words, when you look out at this world and see persons or circumstances claiming to have power over you for good or for evil, you must acknowledge that your being is in Christ and only those who are Christ-inspired can have any influence in your affairs.

I understand that I am to “love my neighbor as myself,” but there are some people I simply cannot love. What should I do?

Joel talks about his experience of being unable to love those who hated him and being unable to give love for ingratitude. He simply could not do it. Even though he did not judge, criticize, or condemn them, and he even understood them and could forgive them, he could not love them. What did he do? He asked God to love them through him, and that brought him peace.

Joel tells us that it is humanly impossible to love those who appear to manifest ingratitude, injustice, misrepresentation, and lies, but you can be willing to let God take over. To do this, you

have to “nothingize” yourself—that is, nothingize the personal sense of self—and not try to be self-righteous about loving the enemy. You must learn to let God do the loving, and you must be willing to be an instrument through which God’s love flows to your enemies as well as your friends.

Even though the appearance is that in the world there are good people and bad people, just people and unjust people, when you climb up into the circle of God, you see that God is the one and only principle of *all* people, the animating love and life and truth of *all* people.

Does my state of consciousness affect others?

Those who come to you for companionship, supply, or some form of material good, are really longing and craving for the true substance of life, the “meat that perisheth not.” If you give them something material, you are giving them a stone. You can only give them the bread of life to the degree that you are entertaining the consciousness of truth within your being as they come to you. They are looking to you for the truth of being, but oftentimes your mind is so occupied with concern over your own discords and inharmonies that they are turned away without the divine substance which they sought from you. Not only is your own life affected by what you allow into your consciousness, so is the life of everyone who brings himself to your consciousness.

How do I maintain the consciousness of truth?

We maintain the consciousness of truth by being watchful about what we allow to enter our consciousness. In our study chapter, Joel says,

“Your home is a composite of your consciousness of home. You are the doorkeeper of your household, and you should stand guard at the door to see that nothing gets past that door which does not have the right to be there. This door, however, is not a material door. The only door there is, is the door of consciousness, and the only door for which you are responsible is that door.

“What do you allow to get past your door, your consciousness? Do you accept contagion and infection as power in your home? Are you a party to discord and bickering? You should make it a matter of daily realization that nothing can enter the doorway of consciousness except the truth of being, and that no suggestion of human power, whether physical, material, or mental, is law. Any belief that enters your home must first enter through your consciousness, and the truth of being in your consciousness will act as a law of annihilation to any false belief that would intrude.”

How do I handle people who bring discord or inharmony to my home, to my consciousness?

God is my only home; God is the substance and the activity of my home, and as long as my home appears on earth as a material structure, it will express the harmony of God. As long as I entertain truth in consciousness, nothing unlike God can remain in my home—my temple, my being, my body. Anyone or anything of a discordant nature that would enter, or might temporarily be permitted to enter, will be removed in its time and in such a way that it will injure no one, but be a blessing to everyone involved. Those in that home will either reflect that harmony or they

will be removed. God is the consciousness of every individual who enters my home, whether family or friends. Nothing enters my home to contaminate or violate its sanctity, because God is my only home.

Since God is my consciousness, nothing can enter that consciousness that "defileth or maketh a lie." Even if, in my ignorance or human softness, I permit something to enter which has no place there, it will not remain long. The consciousness of Truth and Life which I am will heal it or remove it. I am willing that everybody and everything that enters my consciousness shall be either healed or removed.

I dare not cling to anyone and say, "With all your faults, I still need you and want you." I take my stand with God and if necessary, leave father, mother, brother, sister, husband, or wife in order to dwell in the secret place of the Most High. Clinging to what you know is not right because of human emotion can impede your spiritual progress. Rely on your inner guidance to know when to let go or not to let go.

How do I deal with relationship problems in marriage?

On the topic of marriage, Joel says, "What God has joined together, no man CAN put asunder." No man has the power to undo the work of God. So in dealing with marital problems, Joel's advice is to realize that since God is one, the only relationship that exists is a relationship of oneness, and there can be no division, separation, or inharmony in that oneness. Division, separation, and inharmony happen only in twoness, which is a false belief.

But Joel also says that this realization does not ensure that a couple will stay together. They may not be spiritually one. In that case, this realization of oneness might bring about a separation or divorce more quickly than would otherwise be the case, freeing both from the yoke of inharmony and discord and enabling both to find their oneness elsewhere. If the married partners cannot attune to the reality of oneness, they may be better off apart so each can find that experience. Two people cannot realize oneness or true happiness when life becomes a continuous battle of misunderstandings and disagreements.

Practitioners dealing with marriage problems should never judge. Rather, in cases of marital discord and inharmony, they should hold to the fact that God is the only one, and there is only one marriage, the mystical marriage. The mystical marriage, or the relationship of oneness between God and the individual, is God-ordained, and no man can put it asunder. "I and the Father are one."

While knowing oneness will not keep all marriages together, it will keep each person one with their good, whatever that might be. Everything must unfold in accordance with spiritual good, not in accordance with some human idea of what constitutes good. No one has the right to outline.

How can I protect my loved ones from discords?

Joel counsels us that it is unwise to attempt to protect loved ones from the discords and inharmonies which, knowingly or unknowingly, *they have brought upon themselves*. It is better to give up anxious concern, loose them, and let them live with some of their discords. The overprotection which would keep them from the consequences of their own conduct often

prevents them from awakening to the truth of being. Their suffering may be the impetus necessary to awaken them.

So loose your loved ones into Christ, into God; and let the law of God govern, but know that there are always some who cannot or will not respond. Jesus had his Judas. Do not despair over those who do not respond to the spiritual impulse. In their own time, they will. Even Saul of Tarsus came into the light. Sooner or later, every knee will bend—every knee. At some time or other, all men will be taught of God.

How should I handle people who are standing in the way of my spiritual progress?

People believe that they are held back because of the lack of demonstration of someone around them, or that the lack of demonstration on the part of someone else may have an adverse influence upon them. But there could never be such an adverse influence unless the individual permitted it. Each individual is responsible for his own spiritual demonstration, and it is useless to blame the other fellow for one's own lack of spiritual courage.

Jesus taught that it is necessary to leave mother, father, brother, sister "for my sake." But most people are not ready or willing to leave those they believe are holding back their demonstration. No influence outside one's own being can act upon him unless he has accepted the universal belief in a selfhood apart from God. No one can come between you and your realization of Christhood unless humanly, you are depending on them for support or supply. When you depend on others, you are living under the human law of limitation, and not under infinite Grace.

What if my circumstances are such that I have to depend on others?

After you learn the truth of your identity, if you persist in putting your "faith in princes," that is, relying on friends or family instead of freeing yourself and living under grace, you will continue to live under the human law of limitation. In spiritual living, there is no dependence on person or thing. Your good may come to you *through* others, but in truth, it is from the infinite bounty of God. That is not dependence. When you realize that "I and my Father are one," your good is God's allness made manifest as your individual being.

Good is inherent in our relationship with God, and that relationship cannot be changed. The human picture does not testify to that, because to benefit by the relationship of father and son, an activity of truth must take place in individual consciousness. When we know our oneness with God, there is no dependence on others, and all relationships are joyous.

How can I see all people as my brothers and sisters?

When you learn to "call no man on earth your father," and you know that God is your father, then every man, woman, and child on this earth becomes your brother or sister, because you are children of the same father. You are brothers and sisters by divine ordinance.

There is a bond, a spiritual tie, which binds together all the children of God. This is not a tie to human beings or mortals, and that is why those who persist in remaining on the human or mortal level ultimately drift out of the experience of the more spiritually illumined. Each one draws unto himself those with whom he is spiritually united, his spiritual brothers and sisters; but

those who live and insist on living on the mortal or material plane sooner or later drift away from him, and sometimes the greatest heartaches come from trying to hold on to them.

What should I do when others fail me?

It makes no difference in your life who fails you. It makes a difference only to them because they have failed in their demonstration of their Christhood, but it will make no difference to you if you have learned your relationship to God.

Since God is the life, wisdom, activity, and supply of your being, you have no demonstration to make which depends upon anyone here on earth. You are spiritually fed, clothed, and housed. Your utter and complete reliance is on this truth that all that the Father has is yours. If the whole earth were wiped away, this one truth would remain, “I and my Father are one,” and all that the Father has would still be yours.

Practice, Practice, Practice

At the beginning of these study suggestions, we quoted Joel saying, “In the book *Practicing the Presence* there is a chapter, ‘Love Thy Neighbor,’ and in *The Art of Spiritual Healing* there is a chapter, ‘Relationship of Oneness.’ Now these two chapters contain the entire story of right human relationships, how to establish them and how to maintain them. It’s all embodied in those two chapters, and anyone who would make a practice of those two chapters for any length of time at all, some for a shorter while and others longer, will find that they can develop harmonious relationships.”⁵

We all have plenty of opportunities every day to practice the lessons in “Relationship of Oneness.” Even if we have limited physical contact with others, we can practice the lessons with all those we see “virtually” on television, video, or online, or even those who simply come to mind.

⁵ Recording 383A, “Healing Principles of The Infinite Way,” from the 1960 Auckland Closed Class.