

**Optional Study and Practice for *Consciousness Is What I Am*,
Chapter 1, “The Dedicated Consciousness”**

In this chapter, Joel tells us that no one really lives until he has found something greater than himself to which he permits his life to be dedicated. He says that such dedication comes as grace, when something of a spiritual nature is introduced into the consciousness of an individual. When that happens to us, we must decide whether we are willing to commit to working toward a life of dedication.

If we are willing, we have to learn how to open our consciousness to the inflow of Spirit. We have to consciously remember the principles of spiritual living and practice them. We have to begin to pray without ceasing—not just to pray for a period in the morning, but to live our whole life as a prayer, as a continuous dedication to a spiritual purpose.

But Joel goes on to say that this dedication cannot be one that comes from our own personal ideas; it cannot be a dedication that we bring about by our own human efforts. Rather, we must be “dedicated by God.” God, the divine Self of our own being, is knocking at the door of our consciousness, seeking to consecrate our mind and body to **Its** use and purpose, not ours; seeking to consecrate our home and business to **Its** purpose, not ours.

With this in mind, it is worthwhile to contemplate these questions:

- What does it really mean to “let my divine Self consecrate my mind, body, home, and business to Its use and Its purpose, not mine?”
- Would this change my life? If so, how?
- Am I willing to make this commitment?

Joel’s Recommended Practices

If you are ready to live a life dedicated by God, Joel recommends several practices in this chapter that will support your endeavor.

1. Open your consciousness each day that God may consecrate and dedicate it.

Each day, open your consciousness that God may consecrate and dedicate it. The **I** of your being, which is God manifest, your own Soul, stands at the door of your consciousness and knocks. **But you have to open the door; you have to admit the Spirit consciously.**

Every day you should have a period in which you close your eyes, turn within, and invite God to enter. Think of your mind as the door. Since God, Infinity, is omnipresent, the moment you open the door, this Infinity floods you, and you are under grace. The grace of God is the wisdom that comes through, the presence and the power, and that grace gives you your reward, your recognition, and your fruitage. But you have a part to play:

Lord, I know You are knocking at the door of my consciousness, and I am opening my consciousness. Take over my mind and body. Be my Soul; be my life.

Then you can go for hours and be rightly guided, directed, benefited, and blessed. But at some point, you will need another period of renewal:

"I stand at the door, and knock." God, the Infinite, the Eternal, the Immortal, the Supreme, fills all space and is Omnipresence Itself. As I open my consciousness to receive God, I am permeated with God-consciousness. My mind is dedicated—my body, my business, my home, my talent, my everything—is dedicated by God, and God is using it for Its purpose, for which I am an instrument.

Here it is helpful to contemplate the question:

- What does it mean to "open your consciousness?" How do you open your consciousness?

You have to bring yourself under the law of God that you may be God-governed, and that has to be an act of your own consciousness. Joel teaches that we can do this through meditation. Consciously opening the ear three or four times a day opens the door of your consciousness, and it need be for only two, three, or four minutes, and sometimes only for ten or twenty seconds. This is an invitation to God to enter. And the Spirit does enter—sometimes immediately, sometimes slowly, but always eventually. If you turn within for the purpose of letting your mind and body be dedicated to holy and good purposes, the Spirit will come quickly.

As the Spirit enters, It reveals that "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me," and "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." The secret of those passages is that He does not perform what **you** would like Him to do; He performs what **He** appoints for you. It is not that **your** will be done, but that **His** will be done in and through you. When your work is dedicated by God, it is performed for you, in you, and through you, and the fruitage is brought right to your doorstep.

2. Dedicate yourself to others.

Joel says that the mind and body, separate from spiritual grace, are the mind and body of the walking dead, and that man does not truly live until the Spirit has entered. Then life has purpose and meaning, because it can now express itself through the individual to "the least of these." As you take the higher step of letting God dedicate your mind, body, and activity to Its purpose, you will understand the meaning of dedication.

It is not enough to be good to your family. There must be a higher dedication than that. There must be a dedication to others. But here again, if that dedication is rooted in personal motives and is merely promoting the ego, it is not true dedication. True dedication is freeing ourselves for spiritual dedication that God may bless all who touch our consciousness. Our prayer should be:

I am dedicating myself to the love of God and the love of my neighbor as myself. I am dedicating myself to serving the least of these my brethren, and the greatest along with the least.

3. Realize that through Consciousness, you have access to infinity.

How do we free ourselves of the circumstances and conditions that govern and limit man, and over which man seems to have no control? How does one bring God into his experience? The answer that came to Joel was that **nothing can happen to us except through our consciousness**. If I am not consciously aware of something, it cannot happen to me. There may be temptation right outside the door, but if I am not aware of it, it does not touch me. There may be opportunities for success trying to rush right at me, but if I do not become aware of them, they can produce nothing for me. Everything that touches my life must touch it through the awareness of my consciousness.

As you close your eyes and turn within, you find yourself in a darkness, but that darkness is your means of access to Infinity. You have access to the gifts and riches of God, the love and life of God. When you acknowledge this, you are ready for an impartation to come to you. It does not come from without. It comes from within, and it does not come from anyone to you: it comes from the Self of you to you. You bring it about by turning within and realizing:

Consciousness is what I am, and through Consciousness, I have access to the kingdom of God, to Infinity.

Then you have opened your consciousness that *I*, the divine Self of you, may operate. When you open your consciousness to the higher consciousness, it cleanses the mind and the body and maintains and sustains them in the image and likeness of God. Something happens that changes your whole nature. You can no longer use your mind or body for evil purposes. Something greater takes over, something greater than your own integrity, something greater than your education or environment, and you find that you are governed by a higher Influence. Then you bring the dedication and consecration of your consciousness to your every activity.

As you are touched or influenced by Spirit, the mind and body will function in any direction that can prove to be a blessing to the world. The Divinity that takes over consciousness can operate effectively in the industrial or financial world, or in the artistic or academic world. Spirit is infinite and functions in infinite form and variety.

When God dedicates and consecrates you to His service, you will be better in anything you do—a better lawyer, businessperson, banker, minister, writer, sculptor, a better anything. When you open your consciousness that you may be instructed from within, you will be instructed not only in the spiritual principles of life, but in the conduct of your business or profession. You will be better at any work than you ever were before because that spiritual Influence is performing it.

4. Pray to have humanhood destroyed and to be consecrated to God.

As the “man of earth” who wants to be reborn of the Spirit, turn within saying,

“God, destroy my humanhood. Destroy the limited sense of myself that I am now entertaining. Destroy finiteness in me. Destroy that combination of good and evil in me and consecrate me to Yourself. Give me that purity which I had with You in the beginning.”

Through this surrender, you open yourself to the divine influence, that It may enter your consciousness and govern you. When the Spirit enters, from then on, that Spirit permeates mind and body. The purification process begins. You have given yourself—your mind and

body—to the fourth-dimensional Consciousness, to this divine Self of your being. Then It begins to function through you and as you.

When you permit your consciousness to be dedicated to the service of God, that is the measure of talent or capacity that flows through. Even if you were not aware of any particular talent, you would soon discover the one that was always there, and it would evolve through your receptivity to the spiritual source.

A Second Recording

We heard recording 542B in our online study sessions because it was the source for most of Chapter 1, “The Dedicated Consciousness.” But the first part of the chapter comes from recording 542A. We have posted this recording as well, should you wish to hear it. You will find recording 542A on the same page as recording 542B. To listen to the recording by telephone, call **1-641-715-3900** and enter **629677#**.

Examples of Prayers of Dedication

Joel often gives beautiful spontaneous contemplations in his classes, but he always cautions us not to use them as formulas. He encourages us to listen for what arises spontaneously from within ourselves. However, sometimes it is hard to get started on a contemplation of our own, and at those times, it can be helpful to “prime the pump” by reading one of Joel’s contemplations.

Here are two contemplations that we might use as “starters” in our work to have God dedicate our consciousness.

1. From *The Heart of Mysticism, 1959 Infinite Way Letters*: Chapter 5, “God-Realization Dissolves Material Sense”:

Father, this is Your day, the day which You have made. You made the sun to rise, and You have given us its light and warmth; You have given us the cooling rains and the snows in their season. This is Your day, the day in which I will magnify Your name.

It is Your intelligence that I need today, Father—not my limited wisdom, but Your infinite wisdom. I need all the love with which You can fill me today. Let Your wisdom and Your love be expressed through me. Without You, Father, I am nothing – I can do nothing.

Use me this day, for as the heavens declare Your glory, and the earth showeth forth Your handiwork, so must I show forth Your glory. Let Your will be made manifest in me and let Your grace flow from me and through me to all those whom I meet upon life’s highway. Grant me the assurance today that Your love is with me, that Your wisdom guides me, and Your presence upholds me. In that assurance, I go forth with joy, knowing that God is fulfilling Himself as this day.

And so I resign myself to You, Father. I give myself to You. I am Your child, forever held in Your love – safe in Your keeping. Be Thou ever with me.

2. From *Practicing the Presence*, Chapter 8, “The Rhythm of God”:

God in the midst of me is mighty, and because God is in the midst of me, I need nothing; I lack nothing. Of myself, I have no ability; I have no understanding of my own, but God's understanding is infinite. "He that is within me performeth that which is appointed for me. . . . He that is within me is greater than he that is in the world." I become the willing instrument of God, and through me, He utters His voice and the earth melteth.

I seek nothing for myself; I seek only to be used as an instrument to bring light to those still in darkness. I do not use Truth, but I permit Truth to use me. I let Truth flow through me to the nations of the world who are still seeking what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed; but I live, not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Every truth that comes into my consciousness is the length of my days, my daily supply, and my wisdom and understanding. All I need or ever shall need is to hear the still small voice within me and rest in the rhythm of God.

God's grace flows out into this world as an invisible presence and as an invisible power of blessing through me. I am that center through which that grace is bestowed upon the world—my world. I am God's instrument, through which the divine wisdom, the bread of life, the wine of life, and the water of life are reaching mankind. The nations of the world seek bread, food, clothing, and housing, but "not ye, my disciples"—not I. I seek only the kingdom of God and I let God's grace flow through me.

The Spirit of God in me is the Christ. Its function is to heal, raise the dead, open the eyes of the blind—the materially and spiritually blind—and illumine human consciousness. "My peace," the Christ-peace, is given unto me and through me to the world. That is the function of the light that is pouring through me. The truth I am becomes the bread of life to this world which does not yet know its own identity. I, my divine Consciousness, becomes the wine and the water. This light which I am becomes the light of the world to the unilluminated and my presence becomes a benediction.