

**Optional Study and Practice for *Consciousness Is What I Am*,
Chapter 7, “Attaining A Measure of Spiritual Consciousness”**

In this chapter, Joel emphasizes that we are on the spiritual path for one purpose only: to build spiritual consciousness. He says that attaining spiritual consciousness is the only way to overcome the world of error—inharmony, discord, sin, disease, and ultimately, death.

He also tells us that far too many students study too much, and that it is not what we read that develops spiritual consciousness; it is what we *do* with what we read that does it. Even so, we must still understand what we have read in order to *do* anything with it.

Questions for Understanding

In the spirit of understanding what we have read, consider these questions based on the chapter and the recording. Can you answer them?

Questions relating to the Introductory section of the chapter:

- If there is only one Consciousness, which is pure and perfect, beyond the pairs of opposites, why do we experience both good and evil?
- How does Joel describe material consciousness? How would you describe it?

Questions relating to the section “Spiritual Consciousness Is Not Subject to Laws or Conditions of This World”:

- What are some of the hallmarks of spiritual consciousness by which we can measure our progress?
- What spiritual truths must you understand in order to practice “resist not evil” successfully?

Questions relating to the section “Spiritual Consciousness Recognizes Consciousness As Supply”:

- How does the material state of consciousness see supply?
- What is the root cause of any lack in our lives?
- What is the spiritual law of supply?

Questions relating to the section “Drawing on the Spiritual Storehouse”:

- Why can we draw forth everything necessary to our unfoldment from our consciousness and have baskets full left over to share?
- What is the difference between the material concept of giving and the spiritual concept of giving?

Questions relating to the section "Becoming Aware of the Indwelling Presence":

- Why does Joel counsel us to pause frequently throughout the day to remember some statement of truth?
- How does Joel draw the difference between material consciousness and spiritual consciousness?

Questions for Reflection

In this chapter, Joel discusses some indicators of a developing spiritual consciousness. These invite us to examine our own spiritual evolution.

The following questions for reflection can help you assess your progress. If you choose to use them, it is important to refrain from judging or criticizing yourself in any way. The purpose is only to have an objective look, to think back to the days before your study and practice of spiritual teachings, to appreciate any degree of advancement, and to rejoice that you are on a path that can help you go even further.

- To what degree do I realize that God is in the midst of me and is the only power?
- Can I look at so-called evil people or evil conditions and not fear or hate them, but forgive them?
- Is there some form of error or evil that I fear? If so, to what degree do I battle it, fight it, or try to change it?
- Are there any so-called material or mental laws or powers that I still believe are binding or limiting me?
- Do I have periods when I feel untouched by the discords, beliefs, and inharmonies of this world?
- To what degree do I feel a sense of mortality?
- To what degree do I feel that I live under Grace and not under the law?
- To what degree am I able to "resist not evil?"
- To what degree do I trust that God is omnipotent, the one and only power, and that evil of any nature has no power over me?

- To what degree can I see the non-power of anything that exists as an effect—other people, diseases, lacks, germs, bombs, climate, food, and so on?
- To what degree do I experience the truth that I embody infinite supply?
- Am I regularly asking, “What have I in the house?” Am I pouring it forth?

Thinking about your answers to these questions, what did this lesson teach you, remind you of, or reinforce for you that could help you further develop your spiritual consciousness?

Practices

It is always helpful to pull out any practices Joel suggests in the lesson, choose one or two, and practice them for the study period. Here are some quotations from the chapter relating to practice:

- “What have you in your consciousness? Do not look out into the world and see what you want and ask for it; do not have an idea in your mind of what you would like, and then pray to God for it. Ask yourself, ‘What have I in my consciousness?’ The only supply you are ever going to have is what you begin to pour.”
- “Begin to evolve spiritually by withdrawing your gaze from the world and the things of the world, your desires, and your wants, and live spiritually, live from the standpoint of what you can give or add to the world.”
- “One of the greatest gifts we have is the gift of prayer. So if we have nothing else in our consciousness but that gift, we can begin to give in the form of prayer: prayer for our enemies, for the world, and for our neighbor.”
- “There is no one in all the world who does not have some trace of love in him, although there are many people who do not give any evidence of love. But everyone has at the center of his being some love: love that can be expressed in service, love that can be expressed in gratitude, cooperation, understanding, and forgiveness. Everyone has some money or clothing, something that can be given or contributed to those who appear not to recognize the infinite nature of the Storehouse upon which they may draw.”
- “We can decide to take the first dollar out of our week’s income and set it aside for an impersonal contribution to community activities. We can decide that since this is not from us, but from the infinite Storehouse, we will increase that outgoing dollar because of the incoming increase which must inevitably follow. But spiritually the increase cannot occur until the outgo has taken place. This is the reverse of the materialistic concept, which is that if money comes in, we will pay it out. In the spiritual universe we pay it out in order that it may come in.”
- “How many of us have for many, many years believed that others were holding us in condemnation, unforgiveness, or holding grievances against us, not realizing that we were doing it, and not they? No one can forgive us while we carry unforgiveness within ourselves. The supply of forgiveness that we are eternally praying for, we are holding

away from us, until we realize, 'I do not really care whether or not you forgive me. That is your demonstration. All I care about is that I forgive you. I freely forgive all those who have offended me; I freely forgive all those who have spitefully used me; I freely forgive all those who have criticized, judged, or condemned me.'"

- "It is not what we read that does it: it is what we *do* with what we read that does it. The word of God, the truth in our consciousness, is what we live by, and so, we must make it a practice every few minutes, every half hour, or every hour to pause to remember some statement of truth. Some word of God must be entertained in our consciousness throughout our days and nights."
- "Open yourself to the truth that the Spirit of God dwells in you; and above all things, stop this theological nonsense of believing that God deserts you in your moment of sin. Heaven forbid! It is then that you need God most, and do not believe that God could desert His own. Never!"
- "You come to a place in consciousness where it becomes clear to you that you are not dependent on anything out here, but that you must turn to the Infinite Invisible for your good. At some particular time within yourself, you say, 'Yes, my dependence henceforth will be on the Infinite Invisible, on the kingdom of God within me. Less and less will I look outside.' Thus your faith, hope, and dependence on the outer world gradually shift to the kingdom within, and the material state of consciousness yields to that spiritual consciousness which is 'the glory . . . I had with thee before the world was.'"