

Optional Study and Practice for Meditation Study Program
Session 4: Recording 353B
“Omniscience, Contemplative Meditation, and Prayer”

Recap of Previous Sessions

In the first session of our study program, Joel emphasized that **the kingdom of God is within you**. So, to experience that kingdom of God, or the indwelling divine Presence, the mystical *I*, we must go within, and the way to go within is through meditation. He explained why we meditate and the attitude we should bring to meditation, and he identified some obstacles to meditation.

In the second session, Joel put the spotlight on the goal of meditation, teaching that there is **only one goal for meditation in The Infinite Way: to have an awareness, an experience, a feel of the presence of God**. He recommended a posture for meditation and explained and demonstrated contemplative meditation.

In the third session, Joel elaborated on why we meditate and explained the various forms of meditation in The Infinite Way. He described practicing the Presence, gave another example of contemplative meditation, explained and illustrated treatment, and clarified the stages of meditation.

In this session, Joel reinforces the goal of meditation, gives another example of contemplative meditation, describes the fruitage of attaining the consciousness of the Presence, and goes into more detail about the stages of meditation.

Review of Recording 353B

Chapter 6, “Contemplative Meditation,” in [*The Contemplative Life*](#), is virtually a transcript of this recording. You can refer to that chapter to review the recording and highlight the key points.

The Goal of Meditation

One of the key points in this recording is one that we have heard in previous recordings, but Joel reinforces it yet again: A meditation should be directed toward the realization of oneness with God. In your meditation, you should not be thinking of any desired demonstration or good, or any person, circumstance, or condition. Your entire attention should be given to the realization of God. . . . There must be an actual contact, an actual experience of oneness. Something must take place within you that gives you the assurance that you have realized the Presence.

As you meditate, remember that you must have no object, purpose, goal, or desire other than the experience of God-contact or God-realization. You must not have in mind any desired object or demonstration, such as the healing of mind or body, or supply, or protection. Your only object is the attainment of God-realization and the recognition of the Presence within you.

When we hear the words “experience of God,” we might think such an experience would have to be earth-shattering or wildly dramatic—this is **GOD**, after all—and we miss the experience. But as the Bible reminds us, “God is not in the whirlwind. God is in the still small voice.”

Joel has often said that to experience God, you have to give up all your concepts of God. If you are clinging to old concepts of God, you may have difficulty remembering that God is manifest as YOU; that you exist AS God fulfilling Itself in an individual way. Most of us have not been taught that truth, so subconsciously, you might think, “Oh, I couldn’t possibly be that!” We read it; we accept it intellectually, but we are not convinced that it could be true.

Joel talks about giving up the idea of God as an old man who rewards and punishes, of God as a figure on a cross, and other false beliefs about God. But we must also give up the erroneous idea that God is separate from ourselves. The fact that we even name God “God” tacitly implies that God is “other.” His name is different from ours; therefore, He is separate from us. This is why Joel says that the only true name for God is “I.” God is the I of all beings and has never been outside oneself except in belief.

We might say, then, that in meditation, to experience God is to experience the mystical I, the Christ of your own being, the indwelling Presence.

In this class, Joel tells us that the experience can take different forms. Sometimes, when the contact is made, there is a deep breath or a deeper feeling in the solar plexus. There may be an awareness or an impression, as if a message were being given to you. Sometimes, the ‘still small voice’ is audible. Other times, there is a feeling of deep, profound peace.

We never know what form the realization of God’s presence will take, so we must never outline what it will be. We never look for visions or believe we must hear a voice. The experience can take place in one form today and another tomorrow. If you are outlining what “should” happen, you are trying to mold the experience instead of letting the experience mold itself to your awareness.

A Practice: Release Concepts and Expectations

It can be worthwhile to look within and see if you are holding on to any erroneous concepts of God. If you find any, work to release them by filling your consciousness with the letter of truth about the nature of God, especially “I and the Father are ONE.” It can also be helpful to see if you have any expectations about what “an experience of God” would look like. Again, if you find any, to the best of your ability, release them, so that you can be perfectly receptive to whatever experience comes to you and not dismiss it because it does not fit your picture.

Suggestions for Meditation Practice

Over the years, we have collected some helpful suggestions for meditation practice from Infinite Way teachers and other teachers who align with Joel about the purpose and practice of meditation. We offer them simply as ideas to consider. Some might resonate with you and be helpful. To view the suggestions, [click/tap here](#).

More on Practicing the Presence

Most of you are familiar with Joel's recommendations for how to "practice the Presence," or in other words, to go through your day consciously connected to God in your life. In our previous session, Joel spoke about this practice, and we referenced the book *Practicing the Presence*.

If you are not familiar with practicing the Presence, or would just like more information about it, or are teaching it to a new student, we recommend a few additional resources. The purpose of these recommendations is not to give you more material to read but to give you some references that can assist you in practicing.

The Infinite Way Book

In several classes, Joel recommends that students work with specific passages in his book *The Infinite Way* to learn about practicing the Presence. These passages provide a guide to living throughout the day in spiritual consciousness.

[Please note: In the quote below, the page numbers that Joel cites may not be the same as those in your book because there are many editions of the book, and the page numbers vary among editions. However, you can find these passages in the chapter titled "Meditation."]

Joel says:

"Now, here is Scripture: 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.' The important word there is the word 'stayed.' . . . "Lean not unto thine own understanding; acknowledge him in all thy ways.' Do you see the important phrase in there— 'acknowledge him in **all** thy ways.' . . . Or the ninety-first Psalm, first verse: 'Those who dwell in the secret place of the Most High,' none of the evils will come nigh their dwelling place. . . . The dwelling place of whom? That individual who dwells, who lives in the secret place of the Most High, who lives and moves and has his being in God.

"And of course, the question comes, 'How do you do that?' There are probably many ways, but our way, the way I have discovered, and the way that is taught in *The Infinite Way* is this: in the book [The Infinite Way](#), on pages 97 to 103, you will find an outline—not a formula but an outline—of a daily practice, beginning with waking in the morning and going through until bedtime at night, for a way of continuously reminding oneself of this presence of God, this power of God, this function of God in one's life."¹

Other Classes That Teach Practicing the Presence

In some classes and/or books, Joel would take students through the day, recommending ways to practice connecting God with their lives. To read a few of these commentaries, [click/tap here](#).

Establishing Love's Day

Virginia Stephenson is one of the five teachers personally appointed by Joel to teach the message of *The Infinite Way*. She wrote a beautiful pamphlet titled "Establishing Love's Day,"

¹ Recording 65B, 1954 Honolulu Lecture Series, "Meditation on One Power."

which provides a guide for living each day in the Spirit. Aloha Mystics has graciously made this pamphlet available for free download. To read, download, or print the pamphlet, [click/tap here](#).

Question and Answer from Joel

In the [question and answer from Joel for January 4, 2025](#), Joel leads students in another version of practicing the Presence.