

## Optional Study and Practice for Meditation Study Program Session 5: Recording 170A “The Purpose and Method of Contemplative Meditation”

### 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.

In the second session, Joel taught 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.

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

In the fourth session, Joel reinforced the goal of meditation, elaborated on contemplative meditation and the fruitage of attaining the consciousness of the Presence, and gave more detail about the stages of meditation.

In this session, Joel explains how to use contemplative meditation to “open out a way whence the imprisoned splendor may escape.”

### Summary of Recording 170A

*Contemplative meditation is a core topic in the study of meditation. Joel says that it is the simplest way to reach deep meditation and the easiest to practice. He has also said we never outgrow the practice of contemplative meditation. Even if you have developed the ability to settle into deep meditation right away without contemplative preparation, there will be times of stress or disruption in your life when it will be a challenge to reach that deep state immediately. In those cases, returning to contemplative meditation can lead you to the deeper state. In this class, Joel revisits the topic of contemplative meditation from a new perspective.*

Recording 170A was not used as source material for any book, so there is no chapter to reference. As we study the lessons in the class, a summary can be a helpful tool for periodic review. You can create a summary of your own, or you are welcome to use this one and annotate it with key points that resonate with you.

### Truth Is Already Within You

The teacher is but an instrument through which truth is expressed, but the truth expressed through the teacher is already within you. It cannot be added to you but only brought to light. As Browning said, we must open out a way for the imprisoned splendor to escape. Everything you will hear in a class or read in a book is already within you but has not yet come to your awareness.

## **Finding Your Message**

No message is your message until something within you responds to it, and you can say, “Yes, this is it. This is my message. This is the truth for me.” You are certainly free to read and study anything you want, and you should not stop until you find the message that registers with you as yours. When you find it, if you wish to make progress, stay with that message. If you devote yourself to it as much as its founder has, you will prosper. So, if The Infinite Way is your way, abide in its message, let its message abide in you, and stand fast with it until it has had the opportunity to do its work in you, through you, and for you.

## **Meditation Is the Secret of The Message of The Infinite Way**

The basic secret of the message of The Infinite Way lies in the practice of meditation. The reason is this: The kingdom of God is within you—the allness of God, the completeness of God, the perfection of God, the eternity, the immortality. This is all within you. You cannot go to holy mountains or holy temples or books or teachers to get it. You *already* have the entire kingdom of God within your own being. All the health you will ever experience is within you now. All the wealth is within you in infinite abundance and can be expressed. All that the Father has is yours at this very moment. Nothing can be added to you. If you can acknowledge that the kingdom of God is within you, you can stop looking outside of yourself for anything.

The questions arise, “If the kingdom of God is within me, how do I get it to manifest? It is no good to me bottled up inside. If every individual on the face of the globe has the allness of God within them, why aren’t we all enjoying it?” The reason is that we have not learned how to let it out and flow into expression. It was revealed to Joel that meditation is the way in which that imprisoned splendor is allowed to escape.

First, there must be this acknowledgment on your part: “I must not look outside myself for what is already within me. I must find a way to let it come forth.” In meditation, ultimately, you come to an inner stillness, where your own thinking and knowledge stop, and something begins to bubble within you. Sometimes, it comes as a great sense of peace or an inner release from doubt, fear, or worry. Sometimes, it comes with a scriptural passage. There is always some assurance that something has happened. When that inner warmth and gentleness begin to flow, that is the kingdom of God beginning to flow out from you.

## **Humility is Required**

You have to apply that which flows forth in a practical way. For example, if you were called upon to help someone and your first instinct was, “Oh, I haven’t enough understanding or experience,” you would dam up this inner splendor and cut yourself off from your own supply, spirituality, spiritual wisdom, and spiritual understanding. But if you remembered that the Psalmist said, “His understanding is infinite,” meaning the understanding of the Father within you, you would say, “Yes, I will give you immediate help,” and you would turn within and let the Father’s understanding flow. You would claim no understanding, experience, or spirituality of your own. You would forget yourself and all your glories and limitations and realize that it isn’t *you* being called upon; it is *His understanding* being called upon. So you would close your eyes in meditation and realize, “The Father within me, He doeth the works. It is His understanding, the depth of His wisdom, that meets this need, not mine. ‘He uttered His voice, and the earth melted.’”

The true sense of humility comes when you claim nothing of yourself. You are the instrument through which *God's* grace, wisdom, understanding, spirit, and abundance flow. *Your* understanding will not benefit you or another. Even if you memorized all the truths in all the truth books, you would only be able to help someone with the cold letter of truth, and as Paul said, "The letter [of truth] killeth, but the spirit [of truth] giveth life."

Only as you fill yourself with these truths and let them abide in you that, when the need arises and you turn within, the particular truth necessary to that experience will unravel itself from all the rest and come out into active expression. When He utters His voice, He utters it with just the right words. His wisdom is infinite. If you will forget all the knowledge of truth that you have and go within, recognizing, "I of my own self know nothing and can do nothing; His wisdom is infinite; His power is all power," you will find that you have opened out a way for the imprisoned splendor to escape.

### **Meditation Is Not Easy To Accomplish**

For most of us, meditation is not easy to accomplish. From infancy, we have been raised to play with something outside ourselves. At first, it was rattles, dolls, and toys. Then we came to books and games and then to thoughts and things. As a result, we have not developed the capacity to commune inwardly with the Father within. We have to learn how to do that, how to get still and silent, how to sit without the hands fidgeting with something.

In *The Infinite Way*, there are aids to the practice of turning within. Almost all the writings have chapters on meditation. The books *Living The Infinite Way* and *Practicing the Presence* are wholly a preparation for meditation, and the book *The Art of Meditation* embraces the entire subject.

It is easier to meditate if you are led by someone who has some measure of experience and some developed knack for meditation. If you are just starting a meditation practice, your meditations will be easier when you meditate with another than when you try to meditate alone. However, the simplest way to reach deep meditation and the easiest to practice is contemplative meditation, which serves as an opening wedge to the deeper state.

### **Contemplative Meditation Leads to Deep Meditation**

You can begin your contemplative meditation by contemplating the nature of God, the nature of error, the nature of prayer, or the nature of the Christ, or individual being. Take just one of them at a time for contemplation. For instance, you might start with the nature of God.

*[Joel conducts a contemplative meditation on the nature of God. He focuses on Jesus' teaching about God and the omnipresent nature of I Am. He moves to the nature of God as love and life eternal. In the recording posted [on the Goldsmith Global website](#), this meditation begins at 28:25.]*

Eventually, in a contemplative meditation, you settle into quietness, an inner peace. If that does not happen right away, simply continue to practice contemplative meditation. At some point, your own inner contemplation will carry you into that inner peace.

If you took the term "the Christ" for contemplation, you would become aware that the nature of the Christ is to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to open the eyes of the blind, and to unstop the ears of the deaf—materially and spiritually. You would realize that that very Christ is within you. You

would know that everything you have been seeking in books, teachings, and teachers was already locked up within your own being, and all you had to do was sit in inner contemplation and bring it out. By contemplating, you let it come out into expression. You open out a way for that imprisoned splendor to escape.

If you contemplate the nature of error, you might go back to Jesus healing the crippled and the blind, raising the dead, forgiving sin, and refusing to condemn. He knew that neither sin, disease, nor death had power. We, too, must not fear or fight appearances; we must realize they have no power and know their nothingness. Such a contemplation meditation does not heal but settles you back into the kingdom of God, the atmosphere of Spirit. As you settle into that inner stillness, the deep silence of God comes, and *it* does the healing work. That is the activity of “the Father within,” or “the Christ,” or “the I Am,” and you are the instrument.

When the human mind is silent, the Christ mind functions. But first, you must attain that silence. You cannot do it by stopping thought, because you can't willfully stop your thinking. But you can gently and peacefully contemplate the nature of God or the nature of the Christ until thinking stops of its own accord. Then, you go into an inner silence or stillness. That silence may last only a tenth of a second, but that is long enough. In that split second of silence, of complete peace, the dead can be made to walk, the sick can be healed, and the blind can have their eyes opened. It is the silence that does it. It isn't *your* understanding or *your* knowledge that does it. Your role is to bring about that silence, and that second of silence permits the imprisoned splendor to escape.

### **The Truth Has Been Hidden from the Masses**

Moses thought it wise to go up on the mountaintop and talk with God, because if he did it in the presence of the Hebrews, they would never understand why someone was not there talking to him. So, the Hebrews never learned that the kingdom of God was within them. Later, this truth was kept from the masses because they had no education, and it was believed that they could not understand it. Throughout the ages in Europe, the only people who were entitled to education were those who went into monasteries or nunneries. There were no public schools or universities; all higher education was in church academies.

Only in modern days has truth been made available to everybody. Today, truth is published in affordable books you could not get for thousands of dollars ages ago. But we must remember that truth isn't truth while it's in a book. Truth is only truth after you take it into your consciousness, abide with it, and let it abide with you. In a book, it is only the letter of truth.

### **Through Contemplative Meditation, Make a Way for the Imprisoned Splendor to Escape**

If you go within and ask the Father to reveal Himself, you will find that the Father will give you the truth that is quick and sharp and powerful, the truth that causes the dead to walk. Go to the kingdom of God within yourself, because all truth is already there. Any truth you get from a book or a teacher comes to you second-hand. But when you make it your own, when it lives in you, then it does something for you because then you have the Word of God right in the midst of you. But even when you have it within you, you still must make a way for that imprisoned splendor to escape.

One way is through contemplative meditation. When you have finished contemplating truth, when the mental activity of thinking stops, and you come to those few moments of inner peace and silence, you are no longer in contemplative meditation. You are in meditation itself. You are

ready for the still, small voice to utter itself within you. You are in a state of receptivity, and the Father can speak to you and through you to others.

To open out a way for the imprisoned splendor to escape, recognize that you are already infinite, not of yourself, but because God constitutes your life, mind, soul, and being, and all that the Father hath is yours. Then, begin to draw out from that infinity. Instead of expecting something from friends, relatives, or teachers, begin to pour out to them. In other words, don't look to anybody for forgiveness; begin to forgive. Don't look to anybody for love; begin to love. Don't look to anybody for cooperation; begin to cooperate. Don't look to anybody for supply, start giving out supply. Even if you have to begin with pocket change, begin to hand it out. Don't look for it to come in, because you will be disappointed, and even if it came in humanly, it wouldn't last.

When the poor widow was asked, "What have you in your house?" she answered, "A few drops of oil." She was told, "Begin to pour." She began to pour, and the cruse of oil never ran dry. When the disciples were asked, "What have you to feed the multitudes?" they answered, "A few loaves and fishes." They were told to begin breaking what they had. They began to break and give out, and twelve basketfuls were left over.

What have *you* in your house? Begin to pour it, break it, give it, share it. Don't look outside for love, companionship, forgiveness, understanding, or cooperation. Begin to give those out of your infinity. The bread you cast upon the waters will return to you, but if you don't cast it upon the waters, it will not return. Never try to take someone else's bread. Cast your own bread upon the water—your own love, your own life, your own forgiveness, your own service, your own cooperation—and it will flow back to you. Good is not going to come *to* you, but if you let it, good is going to flow out *from* you, and what flows out *from* you, you can expect to flow back *to* you. But first, it must flow out *from* you.

So, the way to begin that flow is through contemplative meditation, which leads you into the depth of meditation. Then, that Spirit of God in man bursts forth. But first, you must know that you have that Spirit within you, and then you must create a way for it to flow out. Those are the two essentials.

Recognize the infinite nature of your own being and recognize that whatever good you are to experience, you must experience through it pouring out *from* you, not coming *to* you. Then, know that by contemplating the nature of God, the nature of individual being, the nature of error, and the nature of prayer, you will be led into the depth of meditation, where a moment of silence will take place. That one moment of silence, achieved three, four, or five times a day, is enough to carry you out of this world and into heaven. It is enough to carry you to a place where you can say with the Master, "I have overcome the world," because now none of the world's problems are yours. That which meets your every need is flowing out from you. You have "opened out a way whence the imprisoned splendor may escape."

### Recommended Practice

During our two-week study of the lessons in this class, we recommend that we simply practice what Joel is coaching us to do: Engage in contemplative meditations toward the goal of attaining that silence into which the experience of God, of the true Self, of the Christ, can flow, and then begin to pour, releasing that imprisoned splendor.

Remember that Joel suggested that we take as the “anchor” for each contemplative meditation any one of these and let our contemplation arise from within us:

- The nature of God
- The nature of the Christ, or individual being
- The nature of error
- The nature of prayer.