

Christians see — and experience — things in diverse ways.

I believe advocates who insist on the absolutist view that *God is only principle* have “segregated into an enclave” of non-theistic religion, the persistent disparaging of traditional language as “embedded theology,” and a campaign to establish an orthodoxy of language in Unity.

If the conjecture is so, our national organizations should refrain from branding Unity to attract believers of the distant and benign God. Twelve years ago, we had a branding effort that explicitly favored those in Unity who were identified as “key constituencies.”⁹⁰ Fortunately, we are now much further along than we were twelve years ago in understanding what diversity, equity, and inclusion mean: We now know that since God has no key constituencies, we should not have them either.

⁹⁰ *Diversity, Branding and Worldview in Unity*. <https://www.truthunity.net/the-human-side-of-unity/diversity-branding-and-worldview-in-unity>

11. From Metaphysics to Mysticism

If metaphysics can be said to provide us with an understanding of God, then it can also be said that the purpose of metaphysics is to prepare us for an experience of God. We find that purpose in Emma Curtis Hopkins’ *High Mysticism* and its accompanying guide book, *Résumé: practice book for the twelve chapters in High mysticism*. We also find it in Emilie Cady’s seminal essay *Finding the Christ in Ourselves*.

In other words, there is a spiritual progression from metaphysics to mysticism, from understanding God to experiencing God. Many people will be attracted to metaphysics to understand how to improve their health or prosperity. This motive is known within metaphysical circles as “seeking the loaves and fishes.” Metaphysics will be helpful to them. But at some point, their spiritual development will call them to more than an understanding of health and prosperity. At that point, they will experience a shift to the mystical path.

How Emilie Cady shifts from metaphysics to mysticism.

To demonstrate how that can be, let me share ten “shifts” from metaphysics to mysticism that are subtly

embedded in the last chapter of Emilie Cady's *Lessons in Truth, Liberty or Bondage, Which?*⁹¹

1. From Bad Decisions to Fullness of Time (paragraphs 1-5). In the first five paragraphs of *Liberty or Bondage, Which?* Emilie describes God delivering us from our taskmasters (sickness, sorrow, and poverty). Emilie repeatedly talks in this lesson about "an appointed time" when God will liberate us and about a time when we were immature children who did not have the capacity for liberty. She implies that we have fallen into bondage due not to bad choices but rather to not having entered into a "fullness of time." Bad choices are a *metaphysical* explanation of why we suffer. Still, Emilie has chosen to explain suffering from a *mystical* perspective — the need to wait upon God for a "fullness of time."

2. From Oneness with Self to Oneness with God (6-9). In the following few paragraphs, Emilie Cady talks about the prodigal son who will "rise and go to the Father." This is the language of Oneness, which most of us understand. But it may be, as I believe, that there are two forms of "oneness." There is a "oneness with the Father" and a "oneness with the Son." Oneness with the Son is a unity of the Self, described in *The Twelve Powers of Man*, and essentially a psychological process of achieving the wholeness of the soul. But "oneness with the Father" is a concept well-accepted in Christian mysticism. It is a spiritual oneness with a God who is both

immanent and transcendent. And it is just this kind of oneness that Emilie is talking about in these paragraphs.

3. From Being Source to Being an Inlet and Outlet (10-19). Emilie writes, "All joy and strength and good springs up from a Fountain within one's own being." This "inner source" concept is well-known in metaphysics and Christian mysticism. But mystics understand our inner source to be an *inlet* from God, given to us so that we may become an *outlet* of God's blessing. She stresses that "God in us is the fountain" and does not make a mistake often made by metaphysicians that the source is our divinity.

4. From Calling on Principle to Hearing God's Call (20-22). In paragraph 20, Emilie shifts the action from us calling upon God to God calling upon us. She quotes Jesus in the *Gospel of John*, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you that ye might bring forth much fruit." A metaphysician may say that our higher Self, the inner Christ, calls our disciples — our twelve powers. That is metaphysically valid and may be true. But, as Emilie says in this paragraph, God is acting here, not us. She writes: "it was in reality because it was God's 'fullness of time' for you to arise and begin to claim your inheritance." We may make choices as metaphysicians, but we do so because we are mystics who hear God's call.

5. From Practicing Principle to Practicing Presence (23-27). This is the section where Emilie tells us to spend one hour each day practicing the "Presence of God." She capitalizes the phrase, conveying that "the Presence" is real God for us. This is also a well-known teaching from Emmet Fox, who encourages us to shift our focus from life's problems to a focus on God. It is no wonder that

⁹¹ *Lessons In Truth* (Study Edition). <https://www.truthunity.net/books/emilie-cady-lessons-in-truth-study-edition-12>

The Sermon on the Mount and other writings from Emmet Fox found acceptance into mainstream Christianity and recovery circles. Metaphysicians practice Principle, but mystics practice Presence.

6. From Power to Gentleness (28-31). Emilie talks in this section about a “renewed spiritual power” that comes from a daily practice of the Presence of God. That spiritual power is gentle — she uses the word “meekness” — and it results in “Peace and Harmony.” Some great metaphysical writers, like Norman Vincent Peale and Eric Butterworth, speak of the importance of power (*The Power of Positive Thinking, Discover the Power Within You*). But more recent metaphysical writers are qualifying metaphysics as “heart-centered.” Meekness and heart-centeredness are characteristics of the language of mysticism. It is that language from *Theologica Germanica*, a 14th-century mystical book first made available in English in 1895, from which Emilie drew much inspiration. She concludes with a mystical verse: “Thy gentleness has made me great.”

7. From Forgiving Evil to Giving Good (32-33). Emilie quotes the well-known root definition of metaphysical forgiveness: to “give for.” For the metaphysician, we give good for evil. And what is offered is a higher state of consciousness. If someone cuts us off in traffic, we provide them with a blessing. Emilie certainly agrees. But she seems to go further. She says we must “give some actual, definite good in return for evil given.” What that “actual, definite good” might be is not explicitly stated. But I sense that she is calling us to a higher standard of forgiveness — one in which our “actual and definite”

giving extends beyond consciousness to the physical affairs of our life. That is mysticism.

8. From Only Good to Only God (34-38). Metaphysical discussions often focus on what is the will of God. It can be and should be a difficult discussion for many, especially those who have experienced great tragedy. I have observed that metaphysicians typically say that what has happened is “good regardless of how it appears.” The mystic doesn’t talk about the good. And the mystic doesn’t talk about appearances. The mystic talks about God. And Emily says in paragraph 34: “God is in everything that happens to you.” She goes on: “the very circumstances in your life that seem torturing, heart-breaking evils will turn to joy before your eyes if you will steadfastly refuse to see anything but God in them.” In other words, there is only Good when we see only God.

9. From Truth to Trust (39-46). Emily begins paragraph 40: “The ultimate aim of every soul should be to come into the consciousness of an indwelling God. And then in all external matters affirm deliverance through and by this Divine One.” The first sentence is about Truth; the second sentence is about Trust. I’ve written previously about at least three different ways we come to understand Truth — by revelation, by discovery, and by relationships. The metaphysician learns Truth by reading many books. But the ultimate aim for the mystic is to put down the books and affirm deliverance (Trust). Trust is the ultimate lesson in Truth.

10. From Greek philosophy to *Christ is the Way* (47-48). The final paragraph of this chapter, and the entire book, says, “Christ is the way.” I am deeply grateful

for my training in metaphysics. Metaphysics brought back to me the Gospel in a way that orthodox theology could never do. But, for me, as for Emilie Cady, the bottom line is that “Christ is the way.” We aspire to be both metaphysician and mystic, but our spiritual pathway is ultimately the way of Christ — the way of the mystic.

Why Lessons in Truth is Unity’s primary textbook.

I sense that the popularity of *Lessons in Truth* is due to its message of mysticism because the mysticism in the lessons offers an essential balance to the metaphysical language used in the writings of Charles Fillmore. Charles may have written with metaphysical language, but he was far more than a metaphysician. Mysticism was essential to his understanding of Unity’s pathway. Unity writer Dana Gatlin was chosen in 1939 to compose Unity’s celebrated story from the perspective of fifty years since its founding in 1889. Charles declared to her that:

“Unity readers and students see that Truth is a very mystical study. It requires a development of the spiritual faculties and an understanding of Scriptural terminology which this condensed book has purposed to set forth clearly... Unity might be defined as Christian mysticism practically applied to everyday living.”⁹²

⁹² *Unity’s Fifty Golden Years*. <https://www.truthunity.net/books/dana-gatlin-unitys-fifty-golden-years> pp. 95-6

It is easy to portray Charles Fillmore as more metaphysical than mystical. We get a glimpse of his mystical beliefs in his insistent demand for what he called the “Jesus Christ standard.” When he withdrew from the International New Thought Alliance, he was concerned that the teachings had become all about mind science, which is as metaphysical as can be. His criticism was that there was a standard to be applied that many in New Thought had not met, the Jesus Christ standard. That standard is mystical.