WHAT IS GOD?

1A NATURE OF GOD: ABSOLUTE GOOD

"There is but one Presence and one Power in all the universe: God, the Good, Omnipotent"

This statement, so famous in the Unity movement, should not be taken as an excuse to call everything God and to call God everything. The one Presence and the one Power refer ONLY TO GOD. God is the ONLY ABSOLUTE. All else is conditioned and limited. We do not call "things" God. Things formed are not the one Presence and one Power. Only God, the Unconditioned, the Unlimited, the Unformed is the Absolute. As serious students of metaphysical Truth we should have this clarified in our thinking. Otherwise there is the danger of falling into what we call "absolutism," which amounts to exaggerated pantheism. This distorts practical Christianity, which is the outstanding characteristic of the Unity teachings. If one is tempted to think that everything is God and God is everything, it would be good to remember these words spoken by Jesus: "The Father . . . is GREATER THAN ALL." (John 10:29) If the Father (God) is greater than anything that is, then it is not correct to limit God to things that exist.

1B GOD IS NOT A PERSON:

"We cannot get a right understanding of the relation that the manifest bears to the unmanifest until we set clearly before ourselves the character of original Being. So long as we think of God in terms of personality, just so long shall we fail to understand the relation existing between man and God."

(TM/52)

It is very difficult for some individuals to let go of the notion that God is a person. This is understandable. Almost all the words we are accustomed to hearing about God are words we use when we are talking about persons. Even Jesus personified His realization of God by calling Him "Father." But Jesus was not "defining" God when He spoke of the Father. Jesus was naming His feeling of RELATIONSHIP by use of the word Father. He also used the simple word "good" in describing God. Spirit is not a person. Good is not a person. Good is a principle beyond definition. And so it is with God.

1C BEING:

"Being--God the Mind of the universe composed of archetype ideas: life, love, wisdom, substance, Truth, power, peace, and so forth. Being is omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient; it is the fullness of God, the All-Good."

(RW/22)
Mr. Fillmore frequently used the word "Being" as a synonym for the word "God." Mr. Fillmore and most of the New Thought teachers and writers were also fond of using divine ideas as synonyms for God. (God is love; God is wisdom, etc.) This practice is quite acceptable, and is part of any good teacher's "poetic license." But we must also keep in mind that in the absolute sense, God is that which is even greater than that which He has created. God created what we call Being. God created all divine ideas, such as love, wisdom, power, etc. But since the essence or omnipresence of God can be seen in these created things, then it is not really wrong to occasionally use them as synonyms for the word God.

1D TWO ASPECTS OF BEING:

"Being has two aspects: the invisible and the visible, the abstract and the concrete. The visible comes forth from the invisible, and this coming forth is always according to a universal method of growth from minute generative centers. All forms are built according to this law. From center to circumference is the method of growth throughout the universe." (ASP/134)

Since metaphysics deals mainly with that which is true of the inner life of every human being, then it is not difficult to see that the invisible aspect of being is considered of primary importance. The invisible is the matrix for all that becomes visible, just as silence is the matrix for all sounds that become audible. The invisible is connected directly to the Source of all that comes into existence and the power of our faith should always be in this invisible Source. The visible is legitimate, but it is a PRODUCT of the Source (invisible). Throughout his writings Charles Fillmore constantly refers to the supremacy of the invisible aspect of Being. Jesus did the same. This is not to imply that the visible aspect of life is not valid or does not exist. Such an attitude is not healthy for abundant living. The visible is merely secondary in priority under the creative law of Spirit.

1E GOD AS SPIRIT:

"Spirit is not matter, and Spirit is not person. In order to perceive the essence of Being we must drop from mind the idea that God is circumscribed in any way or has any of the limitations usually ascribed to persons, things, or anything having form or shape." (JC/29)

This paragraph states, "Spirit is not matter." It also states, "Spirit is not person." So, what is Spirit? It is important that we have some personal comprehension of what is meant, for it is the one and only definition that Jesus gives of God. Jesus said, "For God is Spirit." God is the Presence of a love, an intelligence, and a power that is beyond all defining or explaining. God as Spirit, however, can be acknowledged and experienced.
IF GOD AS PRINCIPLE:

"The fundamental basis and starting point of practical Christianity is that God is Principle. By Principle is meant definite, exact, and unchangeable rules of action. That the word principle is used by materialistic schools of thought to describe what they term the 'blind forces of nature' is no reason why it should convey to our minds the idea of an unloving and unfeeling God. It is used because it best describes the unchangeableness that is an inherent law of Being."

(JC/34)

This paragraph serves a very useful purpose in helping persons who may be troubled over the concept of God as principle. The word principle, as commonly used, denotes an unfeeling set of rigid rules or formulas. However, this is not the meaning when the word is used as an aspect of God. God as principle is not an unfeeling force. The word, principle, as connected with God, pertains to the perfect and unchanging nature of God. God is the principle of Absolute Good. This is quite different from principles of mathematics, chemistry, or pathology. We are a step nearer when we speak of music and art, but that is not quite it. Absolute Good is the only accurate statement, because Absolute Good cannot be defined, and God is always beyond formal definition.

16 GOD AS LAW: PRINCIPLE IN ACTION

"The development of man is under law. Creative Mind is not only law, but it is governed by the action of the law that it sets up. We have thought that man was brought forth under the fiat or edict of a great creative Mind that could make or unmake at will, or change its mind and declare a new law at any time; but a clear understanding of ourselves and of the unchangeableness of Divine Mind makes us realize that everything has its foundation in a rule of action, a law that must be observed by both creator and created."

(TM/38)

When we speak of God as law, we must be clear in our thinking (as was the case with God as principle) because we may tend to think of God as law in the sense that we think of man-made laws. This would give a cold and harsh impression of God. Actually, God is not "the Law." God is the creator of His laws. These laws serve the purposes of God, which are always good. God's laws are our friends. They work to help us and bless us. The subheading of this paragraph is "PRINCIPLE IN ACTION." Principle in action is called by Jesus "The Holy Spirit." God's laws work to convert divine ideas into human experiences.
IH GOD AS MIND:

"... The connecting link between God and man. God-Mind embraces all knowledge, wisdom and understanding and is the source of every manifestation of true knowledge and intelligence. God as principle cannot be comprehended by any of the senses. But the mind of man is limitless, and through it he may come into touch with Divine Mind. The one Mind is a unit and cannot be divided. The individual mind is a state of consciousness in the one Mind." (RW/84)

God as Mind is omnipresent intelligence. Our minds are not Divine Mind, but they are connected to Divine Mind. The Absolute is limitless, and God is THE ONLY Absolute. All things that exist have limitations. Our minds are CONNECTED WITH the unlimited Divine Mind, and can receive all knowledge and inspiration from that connection.

II GOD AS SUBSTANCE:

"God is substance, not matter, because matter is formed, while God is the formless. God substance lies back of matter and form. It is the basis of all form yet does not enter into any form as a finality. Substance cannot be seen, touched, tasted, or smelled, yet it is more substantial than matter, for it is the ony substantiability in the universe. Its nature is to 'substand' or 'stand under' or behind matter as its support and only reality." (P/14)

God is the creator of substance, it is one of God's divine ideas. Basically substance is, first of all, the divine idea of ALL POSSIBILITIES OF USEFUL FORMS. In his paragraph, Mr. Fillmore calls it "the basis of all form." Substance is always present. Form is not. Substance cannot be depleted as form can be. Substance cannot be added to or subtracted from. Form can have either done to it. So we see that substance and matter are not the same thing. All divine ideas generate energies which can be appropriated and used by the human mind. Substance is one of these. It is the idea of rightful form. Our minds utilize the energy of this idea in the production of such forms. Consciousness of substance is the surest and most powerful basis for all true prosperity. God is the Source.
"God is the love in everybody and everything. God is love; man becomes loving by permitting that which God is to find expression in word and act. The point to be clearly established is that God exercises none of His attributes except through the inner consciousness of the universe and man." (JC/27)

God is love, indeed; but God is even MORE THAN love. He is the Creator of all love and the eternal Source of all love. For most persons, the most enjoyable of all experiences of the Presence of God is in the form of His love for us. "God is love," is a Truth that is being felt more and more strongly in human hearts as evolution proceeds. Religious thinking has reached new heights of spirituality and Truth in our new age. Jesus Christ was the "seed man" of this new age of religious thinking; we are the beneficiaries. God as love is now very, very REAL.