

ANNOTATIONS

LESSONS IN TRUTH (CADDY)

LESSON 12

"UNITY OF THE SPIRIT"

U N I T Y

CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL LESSONS

UNITY SCHOOL OF CHRISTIANITY

LEE'S SUMMIT, MISSOURI

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QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

for

LESSONS IN TRUTH (Cady)

Lesson 12

"UNITY OF THE SPIRIT"

1. What is meant by "unity of the Spirit"? Why is the idea of oneness or unity of the Spirit important?
2. What reason have we for never being discouraged?
3. Is there any limit to God? What limits the manifestation of God in our life?
4. Is there any real wall of difference between the various religious sects? What will break down all the seeming walls and barriers between the sects?
5. Can people of all beliefs get help from God?
6. When we proclaim that we alone see Truth, what does this indicate?
7. What is the relation between the word we read and the word God speaks to us?
8. What does it mean to have a "single eye"?
9. Where does God ever live and where is He accessible to man? What does a knowledge of this truth do for us? Can we depend on the Christ in others to guide them into Truth?
10. What is "your Lord's" whole business?

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After writing out the answers to the above questions, would you like to share with us a short paragraph (on a separate sheet) telling in what ways you have used the Truth principles covered in Lessons in Truth? Some points may stand out in your mind as to how you solved a problem, met some challenge, proved the workability of the Jesus Christ teachings in your own life and affairs. Perhaps some of the lessons helped you to come into a greater sense of inner peace and security through realization of the Presence of God within you. We thank you, and know that you will be richly blessed in doing this.

Unity Correspondence School

ANNOTATIONS

LESSONS IN TRUTH (CADY)

Lesson 12

"UNITY OF THE SPIRIT"

1 What is meant by "unity of the Spirit"? Why is the idea of oneness or unity of the Spirit important?

1 "Unity of the Spirit" means oneness, sameness, at-one-ment.

"I therefore beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1, 3)

This is why we sometimes say. "We are all one in Spirit " The "unity of the Spirit" in each one of us assures us of unity in Spirit; assures us of our oneness with Absolute Good. There is no separate self; there are only individual expressions of the one Spirit. We do not all do the same things or like the same things, but we are all expressing, through our personality, the one Spirit that is in each of us, according to our level of soul unfoldment. To have true freedom we must come to know our fellow men and our fellow creatures as one with us in Spirit, since all of us are manifestations of God as Spirit.

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all" (Eph. 4:4, 5, 6).

This "unity of the Spirit" which is the only reality, has to be made an actuality in our experiences as we raise our consciousness to that which Jesus attained when He knew Himself to be the Son of God. Jesus made this claim:

"I and the Father are one" (John 10:30).

We too, must make the same claim by consciously identifying ourselves with God through the indwelling Christ, or the I AM; then we are to proceed to show this relationship in our thinking, feeling, speaking, acting, and reacting.

The idea of oneness with God, with All-Good, with all life, is the most vital thing we can learn in our journey along the path in search of God as Truth. Only through our consciousness can we lay hold of spiritual gifts. Realization of oneness is only possible as we know that we are never separated from life or any of the other qualities of God that make up our divine inheritance. This being true, we are always one with health, with prosperity, with peace of

mind, with joy, with success, with harmony, with protection. This realization shows us why affirmations bring effective results. By the use of affirmations we are making claim to that which is already ours by divine right; we are not attempting to bring into our life something that we do not already have.

"The realization of divine unity is the highest that we can attain. This is true glory, the blending and merging of the whole being into Divine Mind. 'I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one.' This merging of God and man does not mean the total obliteration of man's consciousness but its glorification or expansion into that of the divine" (Page 151, Mysteries of John).

When we are truly aware of the "unity of the Spirit" we no longer use our formative power of thought to produce that which is not in accord with spiritual principles. We become keenly aware of the Holy Spirit, speaking as intuition, guiding even the simplest of our tasks of every day. This awareness prevents our feeling self-sufficient, for in coming to know our oneness with God as Principle, we also come to know Him as our loving Father-Mother on whom we are ever dependent.

"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God" (II Cor. 3:5).

All that we say of "unity of the Spirit" as well as "unity in the Spirit" can be summed up in what is known as Unity's fundamental statement. This can be used as a prayer for our individual lives, and for our world:

There is but one Presence and one Power, in the universe (in my life) God, the Good, Omnipotent.

2. What reason have we for never being discouraged?

2. Our reason for never being discouraged is that back of all creation is God as Principle, as Divine Mind, willing only good for us. "Every one that is called by my name . . . I have created him for my glory. I have formed him; yea, I have made him" (Isa. 43:7 A.V.). The text on page 128, paragraph 1, puts it this way:

"Did we not know it as a living reality that . . . the master Mind, which sees the end from the beginning, the master Artist who Himself is (through human vessels as His hands) putting on the picture here a touch of one color and there a touch of another . . . we might sometimes be discouraged."

God, as the Author of all life, created us with a divine plan, a divine purpose, which is to manifest God's nature, our divine nature. "Jesus . . . claimed that He was sent of God to carry out the divine will in the world. This commission is given to every man" (page 33, Christian Healing). God gave us also the capabilities required to execute the plan, the purpose. When our thinking becomes

so warped that we lose sight of this purpose, we become overwhelmed with self-pity about things and conditions in the outer world. Discouragement sets in when we have forgotten that "Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4). We then make no effort to free ourselves from outer bondage that originated from negative beliefs in our own mind. No matter how we may try to get away from our divine destiny, we find that we are merely making detours, for God, as the master Mind of the universe, will not permit His plans to be thwarted. Our longing to be released from that which is less than good is really our longing for God, for fulfillment of our part of God's plan.

"There is a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will" (William Shakespeare in "Hamlet").

Divine Mind is the Supreme Intelligence acting to keep all life under infallible, unchanging law. The will or plan of God for man is that all the divine ideas that make up Absolute Good are to be expressed in and made manifest through man "through human vessels as His hands" (Page 128, Lessons in Truth).

Like the child learning to walk, encouraged by his parent, we too are learning to walk the spiritual path. Always our divine Parent, our Father-Mother God, encourages us in our first faltering steps. No matter what mistakes we make, God's loving Presence at the center of our being is offering help. Only as we turn consciously and confidently to God as Mind are we open to receive the guidance, in the form of ideas, that enables us to solve our problems and hasten our entrance into the fuller, more harmonious life of Spirit. What previously may have seemed difficult is now viewed as an opportunity to use the powers of the "divinity that shapes our ends" (Shakespeare).

3. Is there any limit to God? What limits the manifestation of God in our life?

3. As the Principle of Absolute Good, God cannot be limited. As omnipresence, God is the unlimited Presence in the universe in which all divine ideas inhere; as omnipotence, God is unlimited power; as omniscience, God is unlimited knowledge and wisdom.

"God is Spirit. God is the source of all that we are, hence the source of life, substance, and intelligence. The one and only substance out of which all things are formed is right here at all times, awaiting our recognition of it in its spiritual freedom. When we do recognize it in the simple faith that it will carry out our demands, we are doing just what Jesus did" (Page 94, Teach Us to Pray).

Just as God cannot be limited, so His offspring, spiritual man, has no limitations, for he was created in the image and after the likeness of God. As manifest man, however, we are in the process of becoming aware of and manifesting our divine nature. Our understanding of the divine pattern in us has to unfold through spiritual education and much prayer work. At first, we have to be willing to accept intellectually what those who have traveled the path of spirituality have told us, namely that we have within us the

Christ Mind in which all divine ideas are awaiting our recognition and use. Until we go beyond the intellect (thinking faculty) into spiritual understanding for the revelation of the right use of these spiritual patterns or ideas, our vision is narrow, limited. Thus, in the application of divine ideas, we may seem to have produced some limited manifestations. However, the limitation does not lie in God for He is the generous Giver of All-Good; the limitation lies in the limited beliefs we hold in our own consciousness (thinking and feeling).

In one sense the limitation is related to the expression of divine order in our unfoldment. We can only manifest in proportion to what we have developed in our own consciousness, which is our "mental equivalent." If we hold limited concepts of good, then our manifestation will be limited; if we have attained a broader acceptance of Truth, then we may expect unlimited manifestations of good in mind, body, and affairs.

"The key to life is to build in the mental equivalents of what you want. . . . You build in the mental equivalents by thinking quietly, constantly, and persistently of the kind of thing you want, and by thinking that has two qualities: clearness or definiteness, and interest. If you want to build anything into your life--if you want to bring health, right activity, your true place, inspiration; if you want to bring right companionship, and above all if you want understanding of God--form a mental equivalent of the thing which you want by thinking about it a great deal, by thinking clearly and with interest" (Page 9, The Mental Equivalent).

All life operates according to law in man and throughout all the rest of creation. However, we can only demonstrate (manifest) according to our understanding and use of divine law. Were we able to manifest all that we humanly want without growing in consciousness to fit the desired status--that is, without the "mental equivalent"--only chaos would result. Our outer demonstrations have to be commensurate with our inner growth. Anything less than this could not be God's will. Everything in the universe obeys this law of "Like begets like."

"Man does not demonstrate according to the law but according to his knowledge of the law, and that is why we must seek to learn more of it. God is law and God is changeless. If we would bring forth the perfect creation we must conform to law and unfold in our mind, body, and affairs as a flower unfolds by the principle of innate life, intelligence, and substance" (Page 58, Prosperity).

4. Is there any real wall of difference between the various religious sects? What will break down all the seeming walls and barriers between the sects?

4. No, there is no real wall of difference separating religious sects, for all have but one goal--to know God consciously. Whatever appears as a wall of difference, or separation, has been built up by man through ignorance of the Truth.

Every sect is made up of people, and deep within each person is the longing to know God. However, each one will interpret this desire and work for its fulfillment in the way that suits him. When a number of persons are at the same level of soul unfoldment, they tend to band together in their search. It is very short-sighted for groups to set up invisible mental and emotional barriers when all are in reality seeking the same thing--a conscious acquaintance with their indwelling Lord!

Many sects have felt that they alone have the full Truth, and some have put great emphasis on outer ritual and ceremony, losing sight of the truth:

"Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?" (Mal. 2:10),

and "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34).

Page 130 of the text suggests that the relation between God and man is like that of a wheel and its spokes; the hub represents God, and the spokes represent every man. The nearer we come in consciousness to the hub--God--the nearer we come to understanding our brothers of every color, race, and creed. When we feel that we are standing in the very presence of God "in the secret place", then we lose all sense of separation, and know only oneness. With this broader view of our fellow man we can truly follow the edict to "love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:39) and see each one as the beloved of God, walking the path to the Father's house in the way that is right for him.

Only understanding of the "unity of the Spirit" can remove all the seeming walls and barriers that prevent men from living in freedom and peace, and especially with regard to their ways of worshipping. Love must be linked with understanding in order that we may follow Jesus' commandment to "love thy neighbor as thyself" (i.e. recognize our neighbor's divinity). We will no longer expect others to live or worship in the same way that we do. We will see the reason for diversity of expression of the one life, one substance, one intelligence that we call God. We will see, too, the reason for diversity of methods in worshipping, but we will also feel a loving fellowship with every man in worshipping the one God, the Father of all.

5. Can people of all beliefs get help from God?

5. Yes, people of all beliefs can get help from God, because each person is a child or son of God. At no time is any person separated from God, for there can be no existence for anyone apart from Him--"one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all" (Eph. 4:6).

The degree of help we get from God depends on us, irrespective of our belief. If we have sufficient faith to take the steps necessary to make conscious contact with God in the Silence, then it makes no difference what our religious belief may be; but it must admit of one God, and of each man as His beloved son and heir.

Our help from God will be great or small to the extent of our response to, and use of, the inspirations revealed to us in the "secret place of the Most High."

On pages 130 and 131 of our text we are told of some of the methods of seeking God's help:

"The faith healer . . . believing that he must ask, seek, knock, importune."

"The mental scientist . . . loudly declares that 'all is mind' . . . all the God he knows . . . is the unconquerable I within him."

"The so-called spiritual scientist . . . he of the Truth teaching knows that he has already received God's free gift of life and health and all things."

The words do not matter so much as the faith and sincerity of the declaration. Jesus said, "Have faith in God" (Mark 11:22), and He did not dictate the outer method of establishing this faith. Each of us must find his own way of expressing his faith in God and of calling on Him for help. The degree of our acceptance of our oneness with God will determine the extent of the help we receive. No true prayer goes unanswered, but, as Charles Fillmore emphasizes,

"It is necessary to pray believing that we have received because God is all that we desire. The good always exists in Divine Mind as ideas, and we bring it into manifestation through the prayer of faith, affirmation, praise, and acknowledgment" (Page 153, The Revealing Word).

6. When we proclaim that we alone see Truth, what does this indicate?

6. When we think that we alone have found a higher way, than any other person has, of finding God, or Truth, it is an indication that we still lack spiritual understanding. As our text points out on page 131, paragraph 11; we are calling attention "to the small size of the aperture through which" we are looking "at the stupendous whole."

In the chapter for this particular lesson a graphic illustration is given of a number of persons standing by a wall in which are various sizes of openings. Each person is looking through a different sized hole and thinks that what he sees through his particular opening is the whole world. Such limited viewpoints only mark the ignorance and narrowness of those looking through the apertures. Too often this is the approach taken by individuals and by religions and sects. To the one who has gone beyond judging by the appearance, this viewpoint is seen as limiting and childish.

The ways of seeking for and finding God are as many as the persons on this spiritual quest. Because there is but one God, who is Father of all, every way of seeking is right for various individuals at different stages of their spiritual unfoldment, for all lead to God. When there is need to change a method, it will be revealed by the Spirit within.

"Let no man who has been born into a knowledge of God ever dare again to speak or even think disparagingly of or to any who seemingly are behind him in spiritual growth, lest by so doing he be found working against God, who is infinite wisdom as well as love" (Pages 37, 38, How I Used Truth).

It is the infinite love of God that draws each individual to the way that is right for bringing about his own soul development. Others may be used as channels to inspire us but in the final analysis, the path by which we travel in our search for Truth can only be the way that will bring our true fulfillment and success. The way another travels may or may not be our way; only the Spirit within us knows. Because our particular way of spiritual quest satisfies us is no indication that it is the only way, or the right way for others. To insist that we alone see Truth shows our limited concept of God who is unlimited wisdom, for His Spirit is guiding every soul, whether or not he responds to such divine guidance.

7. What is the relation between the word we read and the word God speaks to us?

7. The relation between the word we read and the word God speaks to us is as follows: The word we read comes "to" our intellect or reasoning phase of mind; it is the "letter" and has to have feeling added to it; whereas the word God speaks to us (through the "still small voice") is spoken "in" and "through" us so that we experience it in both thinking and feeling. The words we read may present a truth intellectually, but the word that God speaks is Truth itself. God's word is insight, spiritual understanding, and carries inner conviction.

The word we read may have in it the potential of Truth, but it will require the "breath of the Almighty" (Job 32:8) to give understanding, or the meaning, back of the word. In I John 4:8 we read the words "God is love," but until God Himself reveals His nature to us as love, we have only the "letter" and not the "spirit" of these words. The word we read, and the word we hear may become channels for the word that God would speak to our innermost being.

If we read the Bible and intellectually memorize many of its statements, this does not guarantee that we have grasped the laws of God back of the words. However, when we "take . . . words, and return unto Jehovah" (Hosea 14:2) in the Silence, as we wait in the "secret place of the Most High," then the words we have read may become the words that God speaks to us. All their beauty, meaning, and power will fill us and thrill us, and we will be able to apply them in our daily living. On page 132 of the text, paragraphs 14 and 15, we are told of the woman who had read certain Biblical words many times but when she asked God for a special word, He used these same familiar words. However, the words were then illumined by Spirit, and the woman knew them to be the word that she had asked God to speak.

8. What does it mean to have a "single eye"?

8. To have a "single eye" means that we see only one power, the power of God, at work in every situation; it is to have the faith in God that perceives only good; it is to "practice the Presence of God," thus refusing to accept limitation as being reality.

"If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light" (Matt. 6:22).

The eye represents the ability of our mind to see, thus it is related to the spiritual power of faith that has been referred to as "the perceiving power of the mind" (Page 43, Prosperity) enabling us to grasp the meaning of an idea, a fact, or an appearance. Faith as the "single eye" directs us to our meeting with our Father-Mother God in the "secret place of the Most High." The "single eye" of faith also keeps us steadfast to the outworking of God's power even though the evidence of the senses, the reasoning of the intellect, the memory of past experiences, may seem to indicate the contrary. Through the "single eye" we see God's illumination filling our mind; His healing power actively at work in our body; His love and adjusting power moving to bring harmony into our human relationships; His bounty flowing into all our affairs.

To have the "single eye" means to "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalms 46:10). It is an inner consciousness of the omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience of God; it is knowing "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

It is not what comes to us, what we have to meet in our outer experiences, that determines results. It is the way we look at situations and the way we react to them, that either lights our way, or keeps us in the darkness of ignorance and suffering. When we can become still and know that "Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4), then we are seeing with the "single eye."

It takes the "single eye" to use successfully the spiritual gifts that we studied about in Lesson Ten. The "single eye" helps us to discern the motives of others, so that we are compassionate rather than condemnatory. Only through the "single eye" are we able to use successfully the gift of knowledge, of wisdom, of healing, of prophecy; to speak in the language of love.

9. Where does God ever live and where is He accessible to man?
What does a knowledge of this truth do for us? Can we depend on the Christ in others to guide them into Truth?

9. God is immanent or indwelling in all creation as life, substance, and intelligence.

"Can any hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord" (Jer. 23:24 A.V.).

God lives, moves, and finds expression in and through each of us by means of His own Spirit in us which is termed the Christ, the I AM, the Lord, for He is "the Father abiding in me" (John 14:10).

Therefore God is always accessible to us through the contact we call prayer. Our lessons have referred to this place of contact as "the secret place of the Most High" (Psalms 91:1) and to the specific phase of prayer which makes this meeting possible as "the Silence."

The knowledge that God lives "at the center of all human beings" (Text, page 134, paragraph 21) removes any anxiety that our loved ones (i.e. our friends and relatives) may not find their "unity of the Spirit." While we may be grateful for the specific path we have come we "can cease forever from any undue anxiety about bringing others into the same fold" (Text, page 134, paragraph 21).

We can depend on the Christ, or the Lord, in others to guide them into Truth, for this Christ Spirit is the Father of the human consciousness to whom we may turn as our "hope of glory." The life principle in the seed makes no mistake, but unfolds the plant according to the species and the conditions provided for its growth. The Seed of God in us, the Christ, the Lord, is our "Father . . . in heaven" and makes no mistake in guiding us in the unfoldment of our divine sonship. We always have been and always will be sons of God, even though we may not always have been living up to this sonship. The only Guide, Teacher, Comforter, that can help any of us to live up to the pattern God placed in us, is God speaking to us as the Holy Spirit. Knowing this about ourselves we must know it for those whose welfare concerns us. We no longer seek to dominate others, no matter how near and dear they may be. We leave them free to follow the dictates of their own indwelling Father. When asked to do so, we give all the help that we can, but we find that our greatest assistance is to speak a word of prayer in full conviction that God "doeth his works" (John 14:10) according to each one's need.

As we are lifted Godward in consciousness, keeping our eye single to the good in others and to the outworking of good in their lives, we are rendering them a great service. It is sometimes a great temptation to feel we must advise people just how they should worship God. However, to have the assurance that the Christ in others is guiding them frees us, as well as them, from dominance.

10. What is "your Lord's" whole business?

10. There is but one God, one Lord, who dwells equally in each of us, whose whole responsibility is to care for us.

"The whole business of your Lord (the Father in you) is to care for you, to love you with an everlasting love" (Text, page 139, paragraph 36).

Our Scripture emphasizes God's love for us in Jeremiah 31:3,

"I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."

Our health, our peace and harmony, our prosperity are not dependent on others, but originate in our own Lord within; upon this we can depend.

"But there is a spirit in man
And the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding"
(Job 32:8).

This "spirit in man" is each man's own Lord, his Father who abides within. Other terms used for this first phase of our threefold being are: I AM, the life principle, the divine center of light, the inner reality, the law of our being. These lessons have referred a number of times to Paul's name for this "spirit in man" as "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

When we consider the growth of a seed to the flower or fruit-bearing plant or tree, we know that within it is the life principle that is responsible for the full-grown plant or tree according to its particular species. Everything concerning the growth of the tree (or plant) lies within itself and does not rely on the life principle of the tree (or plant) growing beside it; yet both use the same life. So with us. The whole business of the Lord indwelling is to help us to grow and unfold as the son of God we were created to be. We may look at our outer circumstances and wonder why this does not seem to have been done when we judge by the undesirable conditions that we may be experiencing. The reason for this, our Text tells us on page 139, paragraph 37, is "Because you do not recognize His indwelling and His power."

Lesson Five on "Affirmations" showed us the necessity of affirming that which we want to see manifested. As we earnestly and lovingly recognize the Lord within and affirm His presence and power, we begin to manifest the help and the good we long to have in our life. In this way, we not only experience the "unity of the Spirit" of our own being--spirit, soul, body--but we are brought together in the "unity of the Spirit" in thought, purpose, and understanding with the whole world.

Could we but see the pattern of our days
We should discern how devious were the ways
By which we came to this, the present time,
This place in life, and we should see the climb
Our soul has made up through the years.
We should forget the hurts, the wanderings, the fears,
The wastelands of our life, and know
That we could come no other way or grow
Into our good without these steps our feet
Found hard to take, our faith found hard to meet
The road of life winds on and we like travelers go
From turn to turn until we come to know
The truth that life is endless and that we
Forever are inhabitants of all eternity.

--Martha Smock