

SERIES TWO · Vol. 1

Foundations of Unity

Series II Vol. 1

This volume is written around chapters 1, 2, 3, and 9, from Lessons in Truth, by H. Emilie Cady. The material found in the commentary and in some lessons comes from the original Correspondence School Course, which was originated at Unity School in 1909 and has subsequently gone through many revisions and enlargements.

Those who have been responsible for directing the Correspondence School and who have contributed to the enclosed material include: Charles Fillmore, F. B. Whitney, Celia Ayers, Charlotte Johnson, J. Parker Stokes, Wilma Powell, Vera Dawson Tait.



Unity Village, Missouri 64065

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"I am the way, and the TRUTH, and the life."

John 14:6

Home Study Course Series II Introduction

You and These Lessons

Perhaps you have come to these lessons because you have begun to ask some very deep questions about your life . . . questions like: "What is the real purpose of my life? What can I do to improve my life? How can I find happiness? If there is a God, can He really be of help? How can God help me when I feel so unworthy? How can I overcome my loneliness? Is healing possible in my situation? Why do I have so little while others have so much?"

These questions and others like them are very common. We all ask them in one way or another. Of all created beings, man is the only one who gives evidence of the capacity to ask questions. Whether you have come to these lessons searching for deep self-understanding, or seeking a more satisfying way of life, or merely out of curiosity about what Unity teaches, we welcome you into the process of considering some of the ultimate questions of life.

The lessons in this series are of a more detailed nature than those in *Series I* of the *Foundations of Unity* home study course. They explore at more depth ideas which are lightly mentioned in *Series I*.

These lessons are an organized presentation of those beliefs which have guided the Unity Movement since its inception. It is important to emphasize that in no way are they meant to state final truths. It has been Unity's position throughout its history that Truth is a matter of progressive revelation. In each age, new expressions of Truth are revealed which expand the total of man's understanding of God and the world. Yet these lessons express fundamental ideas which have been articulated by men of Truth since man first began to search out the answers to the deep questions of his life. It is to these fundamental ideas that your attention is directed in this study.

The ideas expressed in these lessons are for the purpose of inspiring you to discover the corresponding truths within your own being, and to open out a way for the full expression of Truth in your life.

"Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise from outward things, whate'er you may believe. There is an inmost center in us all Where Truth abides in fullness. . . . and to know Rather consists in opening out a way Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape Than in effecting entry for a light Supposed to be without."

Robert Browning; "Paracelsus"

These lessons are meant to help you find that place within you where Truth is revealed to you

personally. You are not just searching for intellectual "answers," you are seeking to open the wellsprings of your own being where Truth for you is experienced. This is the kind of "answer" which has the power to change your life and transform the world. These lessons invite you to allow the words in which they have been written to be transformed into spirit and life.

The Story of These Lessons

Early in the history of the Unity Movement, Charles and Myrtle Fillmore discovered in the writings of H. Emilie Cady a clear and relatively systematic way of presenting the principles of Truth which Unity embraces. Emilie Cady's lessons, eventually published as a book called Lessons in Truth, became over the years the fundamental textbook for Unity students.

In the early 1930s, these lessons were supplemented by commentaries (annotations) which were offered by Unity's Correspondence School to expand and clarify certain points in the lessons. Since then the Lessons in Truth Annotations have been an important part of the study of every student minister or teacher, as well as the hundreds who have studied the original Unity Correspondence Course.

While there have been many other formulations of Unity's basic teachings, none has consistently maintained the popularity of Lessons in Truth.

The importance of these lessons can be understood in the following way: They provide a clear statement of the cause of man's suffering. Man suffers because he believes himself to be in bondage ("Bondage or Liberty, Which?"). But this

belief can be overcome, first, by a new understanding of the nature of God, and second, by a new understanding of the nature of man ("Statement of Being"). We are then called to a new way of "Thinking" about ourself and our relationship to God.

But we are not left with only a new understanding; we are given practical methods for changing our attitudes and our life. We are given a practical approach for letting go of the life we don't want and accepting the life we do want ("Denials and Affirmations"). We are made aware of a capacity within us called understanding "Faith" which is based on immutable spiritual laws that govern man and the world. We are given an awareness of the place of meeting between the Christ at the center of our being and our consciousness ("Secret Place of the Most High").

We are then given, in a very understanding way, the methods of thought and attitude that lead us to "Finding the Secret Place" within our own soul.

We are next given an insight into the truth that the Spirit of God desires to manifest through us in more than just one way. God's activity working through us includes all of the gifts of God and more ("Spiritual Gifts"). Finally, we are brought to the ultimate implication of what this Truth will do for us: establish in us a consciousness that unifies us with all persons and things ("Unity of the Spirit").

Perhaps the outstanding feature of these lessons of H. Emilie Cady is the definite movement from man's predicament to practical methods, to oneness with God, and finally to a suggestion of the kind of life we can live. The lessons in this

Second Series of Foundations of Unity home study course have been organized to reflect this movement in thought. We have shifted the position of several of the chapters in Lessons in Truth in order to develop a logical sequence of study.

The first volume emphasizes the metaphysical understanding of man's problem, his goal, the nature of God, man, and the relationship between God and man.

The second volume emphasizes the spiritual methods which grow out of the metaphysical understanding in the first volume.

The third volume emphasizes the kind of life that is implied by the ideas set forth in the previous volumes, and offers some practical suggestions about living the life of Truth.

The material which originally made up Chapter Seven of *Lessons in Truth* ("Personality and Individuality") has been included in various places in the first volume.

Added to each chapter from Lessons in Truth is a commentary made up of material from the annotations to the original Unity Correspondence Course. Included is much of the annotation material from How I Used Truth, Series One and Series Two of the original course.

In addition, there are several chapters compiled from material in the original *Correspondence Course* and other writings, under the chapter headings "The Divinity of Man," "Health," "Prosperity," and "Human Relations."

At the end of *Volume One*, an appendix has been added which sets forth Unity's understanding of traditional Christian doctrine.

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The Way, the Truth, and the Life

It became apparent as the compiling of these lessons developed that their organization into three volumes corresponded in a meaningful way to words used by Jesus in describing His own divinity. Jesus says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). It became clear that the first volume placed the emphasis on the "Truth" (fundamental ideas), the second volume on the "Way" (methods), and the third volume on the "Life" (implications for living). We felt that this was a significant enough relationship to make it a theme throughout the three volumes.

Therefore, as you study these lessons it may be helpful to keep in mind that Jesus includes in His understanding of the whole man—man fully expressing all the Christ qualities—all three of these important areas of thought. It is in Jesus Christ that we apprehend the fundamental ideas, the methods, and the kind of life envisioned in the mind of God for each of us. To exclude a study of any one of these areas of thought, or to emphasize only one, is to leave incomplete the full expression of our being as God has ordained it.

We present these lessons to you in the faith that through your study you will come to experience health, happiness, and joyous living, and be established in the full consciousness of Jesus Christ.

> The Committee for the Development of Adult Education Unity Village, Missouri

Lesson I

Bondage or Liberty, Which?

In entering upon this course of instruction, each of you should, so far as possible, be open-minded. By so doing you will be saved the trouble of trying, all the way through the course, to put "new wine into old wine-skins" (Luke 5:37). If there is anything, as we proceed, which you do not understand or agree with, just let it lie passively in your mind until you have read the entire book, for many statements that would at first arouse antagonism and discussion will be clear and easily accepted a little farther on. After the course is completed, if you wish to return to your old beliefs and ways of living, you are at perfect liberty to do so. But, for the time being, be willing to become as a little child; for, said the Master, in spiritual things, "Except ye ... become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3). If at times there seems to be repetition, please remember that these are lessons, not lectures.

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might.—Eph. 6:10.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.—Phil. 4:8.

- 1. Every man believes himself to be in bondage to the flesh and to the things of the flesh. All suffering is the result of this belief. The history of the coming of the Children of Israel out of their long bondage in Egypt is descriptive of the human mind, or consciousness, growing up out of the animal or sense part of man and into the spiritual part.
- 2. "And Jehovah said [speaking to Moses], I have surely seen the affliction of my people that are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;
- 3. "And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey" (Exod. 3:7, 8).
- 4. These words express exactly the attitude of the Creator toward His highest creation, man.
- 5. Today, and all the days, He has been saying to us, His children: "I have surely seen the affliction of you who are in Egypt [darkness of ignorance], and have heard your cry by reason of your taskmasters [sickness, sorrow, and poverty]; and I am [not I will, but I am now] come down to deliver you out of all this suffering, and to bring you up unto a good land and a large, unto a land

flowing with good things" (Exod. 3:7 adapted).

6. Sometime, somewhere, every human being must come to himself. Having tired of eating husks, he will "arise and go to my Father" (Luke 15:18). "For it is written,

As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow.

And every tongue shall confess to God"

(Rom. 14:11).

- 7. This does not mean that God is a stern autocrat who by reason of supreme power compels man to bow to Him. It is rather an expression of the order of divine law, the law of all love, all good. Man, who is at first living in the selfish animal part of himself, will grow up through various stages and by various processes to the divine or spiritual understanding wherein he knows that he is one with the Father, and wherein he is free from all suffering, because he has conscious dominion over all things. Somewhere on this journey the human consciousness, or intellect, comes to a place where it gladly bows to its spiritual self and confesses that this spiritual self, its Christ, is highest and is Lord. Here and forever after, not with sense of bondage. but with joyful freedom, the heart cries out: "Jehovah reigneth" (Psalms 93:1). Everyone must sooner or later come to this point of experience.
- 8. You and I, dear reader, have already come to ourselves. Having become conscious of an oppressive bondage, we have arisen and set out on the journey from Egypt to the land of liberty, and now we cannot turn back if we would. Though possibly there will come times to each of us, before we reach the land of milk and honey (the time of full deliverance out of all our sorrows and troubles),

when we shall come into a deep wilderness or against a seemingly impassable Red Sea, when our courage will seem to fail. Yet God says to each one of us, as Moses said to the trembling Children of Israel: "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah, which he will work for you to-day" (Exod. 14:13).

- 9. Each man must sooner or later learn to stand alone with his God; nothing else avails. Nothing else will ever make you master of your own destiny. There is in your own indwelling Lord all the life and health, all the strength and peace and joy, all the wisdom and support that you can ever need or desire. No one can give to you as can this indwelling Father. He is the spring of all joy and comfort and power.
- 10. Hitherto we have believed that we were helped and comforted by others, that we received joy from outside circumstances and surroundings; but it is not so. All joy and strength and good spring up from a fountain within one's own being; and if we only knew this truth we should know that, because God in us is the fountain out of which springs all our good, nothing that anyone does or says, or fails to do or say, can take away our joy and good.
- 11. Someone has said: "Our liberty comes from an understanding of the mind and the thoughts of God toward us." Does God regard man as His servant, or as His child? Most of us have believed ourselves not only the slaves of circumstances, but also, at the best, the servants of the Most High. Neither belief is true. It is time for us to awake to right thoughts, to know that we are not servants, but children, "and if children, then heirs" (Rom.

- 8:17). Heirs to what? Why, heirs to all wisdom, so that we need not, through any lack of wisdom, make mistakes; heirs to all love, so that we need know no fear or envy or jealousy; heirs to all strength, all life, all power, all good.
- 12. The human intelligence is so accustomed to the sound of words heard from childhood that often they convey to it no real meaning. Do you stop to think, really to comprehend, what it means to be "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17)? It means, "Every man is the inlet, and may become the outlet, of all there is in God." It means that all that God is and has is in reality for us, His only heirs, if we only know how to claim our inheritance.
- 13. This claiming of our rightful inheritance, the inheritance that God wants us to have in our daily life, is just what we are learning how to do in these simple talks.
- 14. Paul said truly: "So long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a bondservant though he is lord of all;
- 15. "But is under guardians and stewards until the day appointed of the father.
- 16. "So we also, when we were children [in knowledge], were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world:
- 17. "But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son... And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts [or into our conscious minds], crying Abba, Father.
- 18. "So that thou art no longer a bondservant but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God" (Gal. 4:1-7).

- 19. It is through Christ, the indwelling Christ, that we are to receive all that God has and is, as much or as little as we can or dare to claim.
- 20. No matter with what object you first started out to seek Truth, it was in reality because it was God's "fulness of the time" (Gal. 4:4) for you to arise and begin to claim your inheritance. You were no longer to be satisfied with or under bondage to the elements of the world. Think of it! God's "fulness of the time" now for you to be free, to have dominion over all things material, to be no longer bond servant, but a son in possession of your inheritance! "Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit" (John 15:16).
- 21. We have come to a place now where our search for Truth must no longer be for the rewards; it must no longer be our seeking a creed to follow, but it must be our living a life. In these simple lessons we shall take only the first steps out of the Egyptian bondage of selfishness, lust, and sorrow toward the land of liberty, where perfect love and all good reign.
- 22. Every right thought that we think, our every unselfish word or action, is bound by immutable laws to be fraught with good results. But in our walk we must learn to lose sight of results that are the "loaves and the fishes" (Matt. 15:36). We must rather seek to be the Truth consciously, to be love, to be wisdom, to be life (as we really are unconsciously), and let results take care of themselves.
- 23. Every man must take time daily for quiet and meditation. In daily meditation lies the secret of power. No one can grow in either spiritual

knowledge or power without it. Practice the presence of God just as you would practice music. No one would ever dream of becoming a master in music except by spending some time daily alone with music. Daily meditation alone with God focuses the divine presence within us and brings it to our consciousness.

- 24. You may be so busy with the doing, the outgoing of love to help others (which is unselfish and Godlike as far as it goes), that you find no time to go apart. But the command, or rather the invitation, is "Come ye yourselves apart . . . and rest a while" (Mark 6:31). And it is the only way in which you will ever gain definite knowledge, true wisdom, newness of experience, steadiness of purpose, or power to meet the unknown, which must come in all daily life. Doing is secondary to being. When we are consciously the Truth, it will radiate from us and accomplish the works without our ever running to and fro. If you have no time for this quiet meditation, make time, take time. Watch carefully, and you will find that there are some things, even in the active unselfish doing, which would better be left undone than that you should neglect regular meditation.
- 25. You will find that some time is spent every day in idle conversation with people who "just run in for a few moments" to be entertained. If you can help such people, well; if not, gather yourself together and do not waste a moment idly diffusing and dissipating yourself to gratify their idleness. You have no idea what you lose by it.
- 26. When you withdraw from the world for meditation, let it not be to think of yourself or your failures, but invariably to get all your

thoughts centered on God and on your relation to the Creator and Upholder of the universe. Let all the little annoying cares and anxieties go for a while, and by effort, if need be, turn your thoughts away from them to some of the simple words of the Nazarene, or of the Psalmist. Think of some Truth statement, be it ever so simple.

- 27. No person, unless he has practiced it, can know how it quiets all physical nervousness, all fear, all oversensitiveness, all the little raspings of everyday life—just this hour of calm, quiet waiting alone with God. Never let it be an hour of bondage, but always one of restfulness.
- 28. Some, having realized the calm and power that come of daily meditation, have made the mistake of drawing themselves from the world, that they may give their entire time to meditation. This is asceticism, which is neither wise nor profitable.
- 29. The Nazarene, who is our noblest type of the perfect life, went daily apart from the world only that He might come again into it with renewed spiritual power. So we go apart into the stillness of divine presence that we may come forth into the world of everyday life with new inspiration and increased courage and power for activity and for overcoming.
- 30. "We talk to God—that is prayer; God talks to us—that is inspiration." We go apart to get still, that new life, new inspiration, new power of thought, new supply from the fountainhead may flow in; and then we come forth to shed it on those around us, that they, too, may be lifted up. Inharmony cannot remain in any home where even one member of the family daily practices this hour

of the presence of God, so surely does the renewed infilling of the heart by peace and harmony result in the continual outgoing of peace and harmony into the entire surroundings.

- 31. Again, in this new way that we have undertaken, this living the life of Spirit instead of the old self, we need to seek always to have more and more of the Christ Spirit of meekness and love incorporated into our daily life. Meekness does not mean servility, but it means a spirit that could stand before a Pilate of false accusation and say nothing. No one else is so grand, so godlike as he who, because he knows the Truth of Being, can stand meekly and unperturbed before the false accusations of the human mind. "Thy gentleness hath made me great" (II Sam. 22:36).
- 32. We must forgive as we would be forgiven. To forgive does not simply mean to arrive at a place of indifference to those who do personal injury to us; it means far more than this. To forgive is to give for—to give some actual, definite good in return for evil given. One may say: "I have no one to forgive; I have not a personal enemy in the world." And yet if, under any circumstances, any kind of a "served-him-right" thought springs up within you over anything that any of God's children may do or suffer, you have not yet learned how to forgive.
- 33. The very pain that you suffer, the very failure to demonstrate over some matter that touches your own life deeply, may rest upon just this spirit of unforgiveness that you harbor toward the world in general. Put it away with resolution.
- 34. Do not be under bondage to false beliefs about your circumstances or environment. No

matter how evil circumstances may appear, or how much it may seem that some other personality is at the foundation of your sorrow or trouble, God, good, good alone, is really there when you call His law into expression.

- 35. If we have the courage to persist in seeing only God in it all, even "the wrath of man" (Psalms 76:10) shall be invariably turned to our advantage. Joseph, in speaking of the action of his brethren in selling him into slavery, said, "As for you, ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good" (Gen. 50:20). To them that love God, "all things work together for good" (Rom. 8:28), or to them who recognize only God. All things! The very circumstances in your life that seem heartbreaking evils will turn to joy before your very eyes if you will steadfastly refuse to see anything but God in them.
- 36. It is perfectly natural for the human mind to seek to escape from its troubles by running away from present environments, or by planning some change on the material plane. Such methods of escape are absolutely vain and foolish. "Vain is the help of man" (Psalms 60:11).
- 37. There is no permanent or real outward way of escape from miseries or circumstances; all help must come from within.
- 38. The words, "God is my defense and deliverance," held in the silence until they become part of your very being, will deliver you out of the hands and the arguments of the keenest lawyer in the world.
- 39. The real inner consciousness that "the Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Psalms 23:1 A.V.) will supply all wants more surely and far

more liberally than can any human hand.

40. The ultimate aim of every man should be to come into the consciousness of an indwelling God, and then, in all external matters, to affirm deliverance through and by this divine One. There should not be a running to and fro, making human efforts to aid the Divine, but a calm, restful, unwavering trust in All-Wisdom and All-Power within one as able to accomplish the thing desired.

41. Victory must be won in the silence of your own being first, and then you need take no part in the outer demonstration of relief from conditions. The very walls of Jericho that keep you from your

desire must fall before you.

42. The Psalmist said:

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains [or to the highest One]:

From whence shall come my help?

43. "My help *cometh* from Jehovah, Who made heaven and earth.

44. "Jehovah [your indwelling Lord] will keep thee from all evil . . .

45. "Jehovah will keep thy going out and thy coming in

From this time forth, and for evermore"

(Psalms 121:1, 2, 7, 8).

- 46. Oh, if we could only realize that this mighty power to save and to perfect, to deliver and to make alive, lives forever within us, and so cease now and forever looking away to others!
- 47. There is but one way to obtain this full realization—the way of the Christ. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), spoke the Christ through the lips of the Nazarene.

48. Your holding to the words, "Christ is the

way," when you are perplexed and confused and can see no way of escape, will invariably open a way of complete deliverance.

COMMENTARY ON "BONDAGE OR LIBERTY WHICH?"

The Primary Cause of Suffering

The primary cause of suffering, which is forget-fulness of our divine nature, has caused the wrong thinking that has produced mental images of fear, guilt, anxiety, failure, and frustration. These have reproduced "after their kind" resulting in lack, sickness, and suffering of every variety.

We may outline the *primary* cause and the *secondary* causes of suffering as follows:

(a) Primary cause:

Forgetfulness of our divine nature as a son of God.

- (b) Secondary causes:
 - (1) Wrong thinking, which has built up a belief in separation from God. This has led to fear that we stand alone, and the feeling that our ability to meet the challenges of our daily life is inadequate.
 - (2) Our unwillingness, because of ignorance, fear, and indifference, to make a determined effort to release the wrong mental beliefs that bind us and produce unhappy conditions.

Experiences of poverty, sickness, and death stem from not being aware of our divine origin, and the nature of God's ideas that form our spiritual inheri-

tance. With this unawareness has come the feeling of being separated from God and His good. Belief in separation indicates a belief in two powers: good and not-good, or God and an opposite power. It is one thing to accept intellectually (or think about) the truth of our divine nature and our relationship to God as His son, and quite another actually to know or experience this truth in our life. Until we have added feeling to our intellectual thinking we do not know completely the truth that "shall make you free" (John 8:32). This indicates that we are to abide in the word, or feel the truth as well as think about it. We are then making the law or truth of Jesus' words part of our consciousness.

Belief in two powers, rather than the one Presence and one Power, leads to wrong use of our mental abilities, resulting in conditions of failure, poverty, sickness, and death. Ignorance of our divine nature causes us to think contrary to Truth. This chaotic condition of our mind seems to make us unwilling to release the negative mental beliefs that bind us to these undesirable conditions. "For freedom Christ has set us free: stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" (Gal. 5:1). "Ignorance of the Truth is the cause of all misery"—attributed to Buddha.

Every man must eventually come to himself. That is, we must become aware of the divinity within, for only in this way can we find the joy, the strength, all the good we desire to bring forth into our life. However, we must become consciously aware that our responsibility is to direct the activities of our own mind and heart (thoughts and feelings) in the right way so as to manifest good in every phase of our life.

Man's Inheritance

"An heir is one who receives or is entitled to receive any endowment or quality from a parent or predecessor," according to the dictionary. To be an heir of God means to be a son of God, entitled to the property or estate of God, just as the heir of a relative or friend comes into possession of the property bequeathed to him. Jesus spoke of the relationship of God and man as that of Father and son, declaring His oneness with the Father. "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). In this relationship man is conceived of as a co-worker with God. We can then say for ourself that we are "no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir" (Gal. 4:7).

Each of us is an heir of God, the parent Mind, whether we are aware of it or not, because each of us is an offspring of God, our Father. However, the property or estate of God does not consist of "things" but of divine ideas such as life, substance, intelligence, love, power, and these ideas will take form as "things" through our thinking, feeling, and acting. We can claim or have only as much of our heritage as we become conscious of and use righteously, according to our present capacity. We can have all the good that is ours when we reach the understanding of our birthright under divine law and act accordingly.

We continue to be heirs of God even though there are times when we seem to be slaves of circumstances. It is, however, our wrong attitude toward circumstances that binds us. When we realize that we are heirs of God, and that dominion and mastery lie within ourselves, then we are truly free from old thoughts and conditions, free to accept our true inheritance from the Father, which is the birthright of every person.

Our Objective

Our objective or purpose must be to live according to divine law in our thinking, feeling, speaking, and acting. "Seek first his kingdom" (Matt. 6:33). We should not, of course, concentrate our attention altogether on results, or effects, but we should contemplate the causes, namely *God ideas*. This in no way implies that demonstrations or manifest results are not to be expected or are to be considered inferior, unworthy, or unnecessary. Ideas are meant to be manifested, but emphasis is to be placed on the God idea that lies back of each manifestation or effect.

In order to live, to radiate, and to express God consciously, we must experience a period of preparation during which we learn to control and direct our mind activities so that the God ideas, which are our divine inheritance, may be expressed in the right way in our daily living. (This process is amplified in greater detail in these Lessons.) Scripture refers to a point "when the time had fully come" (Gal. 4:4), and for each of us this means the completion of the period of preparation. This point will be different for each of us, for it depends on a person's unfoldment. Each person will unfold the various God ideas (qualities) according to his particular needs, and the demonstrations will follow in divine order, i.e. "all these things shall be yours as well" (Matt. 6:33).

The Search

The result of our persistently seeking God in every situation is that we find Him as understanding, love, guidance, healing, supply, faith, wisdom, peace. This was a revelation of Jeremiah, who wrote to the Israelite captives in Babylon: "You will seek me and find me; when you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you, says the Lord" (Jer. 29:13, 14).

There is no situation in which God cannot be found, for He is the one Presence and the one Power. If there is any appearance in a situation that seems not good, we come to see that this has been caused by man's wrong use of the powers that are his to form conditions. We must learn to use consciously the laws of life through our thinking in ways that produce only desired good. Our search for God in every situation reveals that His substance, His power, His life, His intelligence are always awaiting our acceptance. We must learn to use aright the power of thinking so as to form only good conditions in our life.

We cannot possibly escape adversity by trying to run away from it. "Life is consciousness" and wherever we go, we take our consciousness (mental attitudes or habits of thought) with us.

When we have faith that problems can be solved, that unwanted circumstances can be changed, we see adversity as a challenge to be met and overcome, and as an opportunity to prove the supremacy of Truth. As we grow in understanding, we realize, as has already been brought out in this lesson, that God is indeed the one Presence and the one Power, and that there is no condition where

His divine ideas (qualities) cannot be found.

The primary step toward escape from adversity or any kind of suffering lies in attaining a consciousness of our oneness with God, in practicing the presence of God at all times and in all situations.

Liberty

Freedom from [victory over] conditions in life that are not conducive to our highest good is first won in our own consciousness (thinking and feeling). We must receive our own inspirations from the Spirit of God within, and make our own overcomings. Prayer is the method of contact with God that enables us to receive the inspirations that make us master of our soul.

Meditation and prayer help us to establish the attitude of mind that is freeing. Our thinking and feeling then conform to divine ideas, and our actions and reactions become affirmative habits. In learning to exercise our spiritual dominion and authority over all the activities of our consciousness, we are able to harmonize our outer world with the inner world of Spirit. This is the liberty that rightfully belongs to every child of God!

Truth

We are often asked what is meant by the term *Truth*. In Unity teaching, Truth is the reality back of all creation. Thus it is God and His perfect and orderly plan of creation. Truth is the answer or solution to any problem, for Truth fulfills the need, no matter what it may be. When we use the

expression, "I know the Truth about this condition of sickness" [poverty, or inharmony, as the case may be], we mean that we know that back of the negative appearance stands the reality of God. In place of sickness is God's life. We are acknowledging that back of poverty there is unchanging God substance, abundantly able to fulfill any need. Truth back of any inharmonious appearance is God's peace, love, and compassion awaiting our call. "Truth is . . . a state of perfection which is eternally, creatively active. Truth may be briefly defined as the action of Spirit" (Prosperity's Ten Commandments, p. 7).

When we use the word absolute in connection with Truth, we may ask what is "relative" Truth. Absolute Truth is God's plan of perfection; relative Truth is that plan evolving (expressing) in degrees of intelligence. Absolute Truth is the changeless Reality; relative Truth is the changing, expanding experience of absolute Truth, Relative Truth produces appearances in the realm of phenomena that we can see, hear, taste, smell, or touch. We might look at flowers and say, "They are beautiful." We would not say, "They are beauty." Beauty is the idea or absolute Truth back of the formed flowers. The flowers are, however, expressing Truth to a degree. They are relative to the absolute idea of beauty. At each stage of our spiritual unfoldment we will be expressing Truth. Such expression will be relative in that it will be in degree, ever expanding as we advance "in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52).

"It is only from the plane of mind that one can know Truth in an absolute sense. That which we pronounce truth from the plane of appearances is relative only. The relative truth is constantly changing, but the absolute Truth endures; and what is true today always was and always will be true" (Atom-Smashing Power of Mind, p. 88).

We may determine whether we know Truth, in the sense of being intimately acquainted with our indwelling Lord, by the results that show forth as conditions in our daily living. We may know about Truth just as we know about a person, by report. But knowing about Truth is not the same as being actually acquainted with God, just as knowing about a person is not the same as being acquainted with that person. If we have accepted Truth only intellectually, then we only know about it; for Truth to bring about results of good in our life we have to know it through conscious communion with the God-presence within.

Lesson II

Statement of Being Who And What God Is Who And What Man Is

- 1. When Jesus was talking with the Samaritan woman at the well, He said to her, "God is Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:24 A. S. V. reads, "God is a Spirit," but the marginal note is, "God is spirit," and some other versions render this passage, "God is Spirit.") To say "a Spirit" would be to imply the existence of more than one Spirit. Jesus, in His statement, did not imply this.
- 2. Webster in his definition of Spirit says: "In the abstract, life or consciousness viewed as an independent type of existence. One manifestation of the divine nature; the Holy Spirit."
- 3. God, then, is not, as many of us have been taught to believe, a big personage or man residing somewhere in a beautiful region in the sky, called "heaven," where good people go when they die, and see Him clothed in ineffable glory; nor is He a stern, angry judge only awaiting opportunity somewhere to punish bad people who have failed to live

a perfect life here.

- 4. God is Spirit, or the creative energy that is the cause of all visible things. God as Spirit is the invisible life and intelligence underlying all physical things. There could be no body, or visible part, to anything unless there were first Spirit as creative cause.
- 5. God is not a being or person having life, intelligence, love, power. God is that invisible, intangible, but very real, something we call life. God is perfect love and infinite power. God is the total of these, the total of all good, whether manifested or unexpressed.
- 6. There is but one God in the universe, but one source of all the different forms of life or intelligence that we see, whether they be men, animals, trees, or rocks.
- 7. God is Spirit. We cannot see Spirit with these fleshly eyes; but when we clothe ourselves with the spiritual body, then Spirit is visible or manifest and we recognize it. You do not see the living, thinking "me" when you look at my body. You see only the form which I am manifesting.
- 8. God is love. We cannot see love, nor grasp any comprehension of what love is, except as love is clothed with a form. All the love in the universe is God. The love between husband and wife, between parents and children, is just the least little bit of God, as pushed forth through visible form into manifestation. A mother's love, so infinitely tender, so unfailing, is God's love, only manifested in greater degree by the mother.
- 9. God is wisdom and intelligence. All the wisdom and intelligence that we see in the universe is God—is wisdom projected through a visible form.

To educate (from educare, to lead forth) never means to force into from the outside, but always means to draw out from within something already existing there. God as infinite wisdom lies within every human being, only waiting to be led forth into manifestation. This is true education.

- 10. Heretofore we have sought knowledge and help from outside sources, not knowing that the source of all knowledge, the very Spirit of truth, is lying latent within each one of us, waiting to be called on to teach us the truth about all things—most marvelous of teachers, and everywhere present, without money or price!
- 11. God is power. Not simply God has power, but God is power. In other words, all the power there is to do anything is God. God, the source of our existence every moment, is not simply omnipotent (all-powerful); He is omnipotence (all power). He is not alone omniscient (all-knowing); He is omniscience (all knowledge). He is not only omnipresent, but more—omnipresence. God is not a being having qualities, but He is the good itself. Everything you can think of that is good, when in its absolute perfection, goes to make up that invisible Being we call God.
- 12. God, then, is the substance (from sub, under, and stare, to stand), or the real thing standing under every visible form of life, love, intelligence, or power. Each rock, tree, animal, every visible thing, is a manifestation of the one Spirit—God—differing only in degree of manifestation; and each of the numberless modes of manifestation or individualities, however insignificant, contains the whole.
 - 13. One drop of water taken from the ocean is

just as perfect ocean water as the whole great body. The constituent elements of water are exactly the same, and they are combined in precisely the same ratio or perfect relation to each other, whether we consider one drop, a pailful, a barrelful, or the entire ocean out of which the lesser quantities are taken; each is complete in itself; they differ only in quantity or degree. Each contains the whole; and yet no one would make the mistake of supposing from this statement that each drop is the entire ocean.

- 14. So we say that each individual manifestation of God contains the whole; not for a moment meaning that each individual is God in His entirety, so to speak, but that each is God come forth, shall I say? in different quantity or degree.
- 15. Man is the last and highest manifestation of divine energy, the fullest and most complete expression (or pressing out) of God. To man, therefore, is given dominion over all other manifestations.
- 16. God is not only the creative cause of every visible form of intelligence and life at its commencement, but each moment throughout its existence He lives within every created thing as the life, the ever-renewing, re-creating, upbuilding cause of it. He never is and never can be for a moment separated from His creations. Then how can even a sparrow fall to the ground without His knowledge? And "ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matt. 10:31).
- 17. God is. Man exists (from ex out of, and sistere, to stand forth). Man stands forth out of God.
 - 18. Man is a threefold being, made up of Spirit,

soul, and body. Spirit, our innermost, real being, the absolute part of us, the I of us, has never changed, though our thoughts and our circumstances may have changed hundreds of times. This part of us is a standing forth of God into visibility. It is the Father in us. At this central part of his being every person can say, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30), and speak absolute Truth.

- 19. Mortal mind—that which Paul calls "the mind of the flesh"—is the consciousness of error.
- 20. The great whole of as yet unmanifested. Good, or God, from whom we are projections or offspring, in whom "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28) continually, is to me the Father—our Father; "and all ve are brethren" (Matt. 23:8), because all are manifestations of one and the same Spirit. Jesus, recognizing this, said: "Call no man your father, upon the earth; for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven" (Matt. 23:9). As soon as we recognize our true relationship to all men, we at once slip out of our narrow. personal loves, our "me and mine," into the universal love that takes in all the world, joyfully exclaiming: "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold, my mother and my brethren" (Matt. 12:48).
- 21. Many have thought of God as a personal being. The statement that God is Principle chills them, and in terror they cry out, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him" (John 20:13).
- 22. Broader and more learned minds are always cramped by the thought of God as a person, for personality limits to place and time.

- 23. God is the name we give to that unchangeable, inexorable principle at the source of all existence. To the individual consciousness God takes on personality, but as the creative underlying cause of all things, He is principle, impersonal; as expressed in each individual, He becomes personal to that one—a personal, loving, all-forgiving Father-Mother. All that we can ever need or desire is the infinite Father-Principle, the great reservoir of unexpressed good. There is no limit to the Source of our being, nor to His willingness to manifest more of Himself through us, when we are willing to do His will.
- 24. Hitherto we have turned our heart and efforts toward the external for fulfillment of our desires and for satisfaction, and we have been grievously disappointed. The hunger of everyone for satisfaction is only the cry of the homesick child for its Father-Mother God. It is only the Spirit's desire in us to come forth into our consciousness as more and more perfection, until we shall have become fully conscious of our oneness with All-perfection. Man never has been and never can be satisfied with anything less.
- 25. We all have direct access through the Father in us—the central "I" of our being—to the great whole of life, love, wisdom, power, which is God. What we now want to know is how to receive more from the fountainhead and to make more and more of God (which is but another name for All-Good) manifest in our daily life.
- 26. There is but one Source of being. This Source is the living fountain of all good, be it life, love, wisdom, power—the Giver of all good gifts. This Source and you are connected, every moment

of your existence. You have power to draw on this Source for all of good you are, or ever will be, capable of desiring.

COMMENTARY ON "STATEMENT OF BEING"

The Nature of God

The nature of anything is its essential character, therefore the *nature of God is absolute Good*, the unchangeable, impersonal, eternal Truth standing under all creation with absolute integrity.

The elements that make up this absolute Good are what we term *ideas* (attributes, qualities) of God, such as life, love, substance, power, wisdom. Each person's concept (thought) of God is based on his particular degree of soul unfoldment as well as on his need at any given time. However, our particular concept (thought) of God does not change the principle of absolute Good, Truth, which remains forever the same unchangeable good.

God is not a *person*. If we attempt to personify God, we set Him apart from us. God is *not a person having qualities* or attributes; He is All-Good. God is Spirit, Being, the everywhere-present Mind teeming with living ideas, qualities, or attributes, such as life, love, power, wisdom, substance, joy, strength, plenty, and every other good thing.

This view of God does not set Him apart from us, but rather brings Him "closer...than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet" (Tennyson). We come to know Him as the loving Presence within.

"Then let us dismiss the thought that God is a

man, or even a man exalted far above human characteristics. So long as the concept of a man-God exists in consciousness, there will be lack of room for the true concept, which is that God is First Cause, the Principle from which flow all manifestations" (*The Twelve Powers of Man*, p. 52).

God cannot be separated from His creation because He is the *Cause of all creation*, the Source from which it comes forth. He is the life, substance, and intelligence that maintains and sustains man and the universe. "One God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:6).

"There is no absence or separation in God. His omnipresence is your omnipresence, because there can be no absence in Mind. If God were for one instant separated from His creations, they would immediately fall into dissolution. But absence in Mind is unthinkable. Mind is far removed from the realm where time and distance prevail. Mind is without metes or bounds; it is within all metes and bounds; it does not exist but inheres in all that is" (Jesus Christ Heals, p. 36).

Some terms used to describe God are:

God is Principle, the *foundation* on which everything rests. Principle is the reality, the underlying plan or framework of all creation.

"God is spirit," (John 4:24), the *life principle*, conceived as the breath of God, the enlivening and enlightening essence of Mind; the substance that permeates and envelopes all creation. Spirit as the *animating force of life* is the source of all energy, the prompter of action, the

inspiring and revealing cause of life, substance, and intelligence in all created things.

God is *Source*, the origin of man and the universe. He is the fountainhead of all divine ideas, patterns, or laws, which supply all that is needed to live a more abundant life here and now, and eternally.

God is *Divine Mind*, in which inhere all the divine ideas on which creation is based; the medium through which Principle functions: "The functioning of the principles of Being; Spirit in action...It is that which, through orderly processes, produces things" (*The Revealing Word*, p. 56).

God is *Creator*, the creative Cause of all that is real, enduring, abiding, eternal in the ideal realm. This creation continues through the power of the creative Word, (Logos) which moves ideas into expression in all forms of manifestation.

God is *Law*, the action of Principle working in and throughout all visible creation. "Divine law is the orderly working out of the principles of Being."

God is *Truth*, the divine plan which contains its own fulfillment; it is the real of all things, that which is continuous and changeless.

God is *Omnipresence*, the only real presence in the universe; the Mind essence or substance which is all-inclusive; that which permeates, enfolds, supports, sustains, and maintains all things, every moment.

God is *Omnipotence*, the only real power, which is the ability of all creation (including man) to attain fulfillment.

God is *Omniscience*, the only real wisdom, all-knowing, all-intelligence. Throughout all creation, including man, omniscience functions as intelligence.

God is *Being*. The term *Being* embraces all that has been referred to as God's nature or character. God as Being is the one Presence and one Power, the essence of *all* being. *Being* is, thus it is always in the present, here and now.

The Trinity of God

The Holy Trinity (Godhead) from a traditional religious standpoint, would be: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost). Metaphysically these can be thought of as: Mind, Idea, and Expression. The three phases may be explained as follows:

God the Father =

Creator, Principle, First Cause, Origin, Source,

MIND.

God the Son

the created offspring of the Father; the imagelikeness of God; also termed the Christ, I AM, Word, Logos, spiritual man,

IDEA.

God the Holy Spirit =

"the whole Spirit of God in action" (Jesus Christ Heals, p. 182); the Spirit of Truth, Comforter, Revealer, Inspirer, Counselor.

EXPRESSION.

"Spiritually whole; of unimpaired innocence" (Webster). Holiness is wholeness in Spirit, mind, and body. In this state of consciousness man is aware of the allpervading glory of God.

The Nature of Man

The three phases of our being are: spirit, soul, body. These three function as a unit, and consciousness of their oneness must be maintained if we are to express and manifest as God intended.

The first phase of our being is spirit, and is called by many names. We say that spirit is the image-likeness of God, for our Scripture tells us, "Then God said. Let us make man in our image. after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). The words I AM are also the name of this indwelling spirit. When God was speaking to Moses from the burning bush. He said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you...this is my name for ever" (Exod. 3:14, 15). I AM is the name of God (or Spirit) in us, and as God's children we inherit this name as our true name. The spirit of man is the divine pattern, spiritual man, the Lord or law of our being. Because God is the source of all life, we think of His presence in us as the life principle, the breath of life, the divine center of light, the inner reality, the Idea of God Mind, containing all ideas. A word in the New Testament that is dear to Christians is Christ. Metaphysically, this word is used to designate our inner divine nature. Paul

emphasizes this in Colossians 1:27 when he refers to, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." This is the Superconscious, the *realm* of divine ideas in man.

The second phase of our being is *soul*, which is also called the self-consciousness, our individual awareness of existence; the phase of our being that says "I am" and "I will." Soul is the entire human mind, for thinking is carried on through the conscious phase of mind (the intellect) and feeling through the subconscious phase of mind (sometimes referred to as the "heart").

"Soul is man's consciousness—that which he has apprehended or developed out of Spirit; also the impressions that he has received from the outer world. Soul is both conscious and subconscious" (Metaphysical Bible Dictionary, p. 628).

The soul is the *user* of the ideas of God that are found in the Superconscious, or the first phase of our being. It is through the conscious phase of mind (intellect) that we are able to think, to reason, to choose, to examine, to judge, to analyze, to will, to decide, to form, to deduct, to reject, to accept, and to conclude. This phase has also been termed the "objective" phase of mind.

The other phase of the soul, the subconscious, is the realm of feeling, and has been termed the "subjective" phase because it is subject to the thoughts received from the conscious phase of mind. The subconscious uses these thoughts as patterns to work by in bringing forth manifestations. It is the storehouse of memory, acting as a reservoir of all thoughts, experiences, observations, inspirations, accumulated knowledge, emotions, moods, opinions, temperaments, beliefs, that we term atti-

tudes of mind.

Our soul is pivotal in its action, that is, the thinking and feeling (conscious and subconscious) may turn inward to the first phase of being (spirit), the Superconscious realm of divine ideas, or to the outer where impressions are received through the five senses.

The third phase of our being is body, for there must be a vehicle through which spirit and soul may express. Body is primarily "the temple of the living God" (II Cor. 6:16). The body is, therefore, an idea in God-Mind, and is spiritual substance in form and shape, embodying all the divine ideas. "The body is the material manifestation of the life principle" (Metaphysical Bible Dictionary, p. 1, Addenda). While the body is always perfect in its original creation as a God idea, the appearance that the body takes on will be according to the use we make of divine ideas.

In its physical form, the body is a marvelous instrument with a divine intelligence in every atom, cell, nerve, tissue, muscle, and bone. When the soul is not using divine ideas in the right way (through the processes of thinking, feeling, speaking, acting, and reacting), then it is the body that suffers, for chaotic, confused, unhappy, anxious, fearful states of mind interfere with this normal functioning of the body.

The Individuality of Man

All of us are concerned about how to cultivate and strengthen our *consciousness* of individuality. Metaphysically the term *individuality* refers to the I AM, or Christ, the first phase of our threefold

being (spirit-soul-body); the phase through which we are always identified with God. No matter how the spiritual identity or individuality may be obscured by the beliefs of mankind, it is always present as the divine center in every human being.

Through the I AM or Christ identity (individuality), we are able to express all the powers (ideas or qualities) of God such as life, love, wisdom, strength, faith, power—all that Spirit is in its infinite variety of expression. God, Spirit, is eternal and unchanging, so the expression of God in every man, the first phase of his threefold nature, is also eternal and unchanging.

Conscious awareness of our individuality (the Christ Spirit) is strengthened each time we refuse to be affected adversely by negative appearances in our world of effects, and by giving our attention to what Spirit reveals to us in prayer.

The Personality of Man

Personality is the sum total of the distinctive personal characteristics that each of us show forth through facial expressions, mannerisms, mental and physical attitudes.

Sometimes the personality is referred to as the "garment of the soul" because it is the combination of both soul and body (the second and third phases of our threefold nature—spirit-soul-body).

Personality is that which makes a person appear either different from others or like others. It is what we build mentally, emotionally, and physically for ourself, as the vehicle of expression. Our spirit is the Christ, the I AM, referred to as *individuality*. The expression will always be according to

our particular understanding of this spirit which is our true Self.

Personality has been analyzed as something that may be acquired, developed, strengthened, or changed in part by understanding, persistent effort, through study, education, travel, and association with other persons, but above all through prayer. Because personality is a combination of physical inheritance, intellectual pursuit (thinking and reasoning), and emotional action and reaction (feeling) in a human being, we may say that it is a "showing forth" of the human mind or consciousness.

When we refer to a person's character as being weak or strong, we mean the type of characteristics that the *personality* is exhibiting. The greatest influence for good on the personality is the realization of ourself as a spiritual being.

Because the *personality* is the way, the fashion, or the manner in which our ever-evolving human consciousness expresses itself, it may manifest selfishness, fear, timidity, arrogance, or pride. On the other hand, when enlightened, the *personality* will express the qualities of the *individuality* (Christ) such as love, friendliness, humility, dignity, and enthusiasm.

The word personality comes from the Latin word persona meaning "a mask," through which the voice of the actor would sound in old classical plays. As the aggregate of characteristics we have acquired through living, personality is the changing part of our being. As we become more and more aware of the divine qualities (ideas) that make up our true nature, our individuality, we release the limited, ignorant, or immature characteristics of

personality so that the spiritual qualities of our individuality may express without interference.

"In drawing distinctions between the personal and the impersonal, do not deny the fact of personality. Your personality reports the progress that you have made in the impersonal. It is the sum of all your former thinking. It is the monitor that keeps before your attention the necessity of doing better. It is the outside of the inside. It informs on you. and you are encouraged or warned by its evidence. Denial discourages the body and ultimately dissolves it. Belief in the necessity of somatic death is denial of personality. Any denial of personality relaxes your grip on manifestation. Never think of personality as the source of life or as the transmitter of life.... Remember that it is the observable form of your mental processes" (What Are You? pp. 14-15).

The Will of God

The will of God is God's plan of absolute Good for man and all creation. It is God's will for His good to be expressed and manifested continuously through His creation. For every species of creation there is a unique pattern. For example, the plan for the rose is that it shall express and manifest as a perfect rose. For the bird, the plan is that it shall express and manifest as a perfect bird, according to the particular species. For man, God's will or plan is that he shall express and manifest his true spiritual nature, imaged for him at creation.

Because our spiritual nature (called the Christ,

or I AM, or our real Self) is God's own nature in us, we often refer to God's will in man as I AM, for it is His plan that man bring forth this nature. A right understanding of God's will for us does away with any tendency on our part to think that anything unpleasant could be God's will to which we have to submit.

"God's will is always perfection and all good for all His children; perfect health in mind and body; abundance of every good thing including joy, peace, wisdom, and eternal life" (*The Revealing Word*, p. 87).

God's will does not apply to man alone, but to all species of creation, operating under the law for each species. As we learn to seek guidance in carrying out God's will in every area of our human experience, we begin to cooperate with the rest of creation with very satisfying results. We come to realize that God's will has resulted in definite laws and that only obedience to these God laws can bring about the harmony, peace, and happiness we all seek.

If we are not aware that God's will or plan is within us, we will live our life without any definite direction or meaningful purpose. If through ignorance we do not seek God's guidance, then results in our life will not be according to God's will. We need to remember that we are spiritual beings with an inheritance of all-good. We need to turn often in prayer to God for revelation of His will. The results will be health of mind and body, harmony, success, and abundance in our affairs.

The Power of God

God-power is the only power that is back of all our thoughts, feelings, words, actions, and reactions. An important teaching of Unity is that man is heir to God ideas. Charles Fillmore states: "Divine ideas are man's inheritance All the ideas contained in the one Father-Mind are at the mental command of its offspring" (Christian Healing, p. 13). God has given us freedom of choice in the use of this divine inheritance. Charles Fillmore taught that among these ideas to which man is heir are to be found twelve fundamental ideas or powers which function in man's mind as faculties. They are referred to as "twelve great centers of action" (The Twelve Powers of Man, p. 15) and as "twelve fundamental mind activities . . . at the base of all existence." Briefly these twelve powers, or mental faculties, may be referred to as follows:

Faith
Strength
Judgment
Love
Power
Imagination
Understanding
Will
Order
Zeal
Renunciation
Life

Each of these ideas or powers (being a principle) is perfect in God-Mind, but as it is recognized and used as a *mental faculty*, its expression will be measured according to the avenue through which it expresses.

God as Principle

God as Principle is the creative Cause underlying all creation, the everywhere-present Spirit of absolute Good, the Source of all that is, the Fountainhead of all unexpressed good. It is the foundation upon which all creation rests. In Principle is found the plan of all creation. "It is the underlying plan by which Spirit (God) moves in expressing itself" (The Revealing Word, p. 156).

God as Principle is the absolute Truth that is back of all cause, all expression, and all manifestation. It is the passive, formless Mind substance in which all divine ideas inhere. Principle is the total of all the fundamental elements of Being, all the underlying truths that are classed as spiritual realities, all the qualities (ideas) that man attributes to the eternal, self-existent One.

God as law is the dynamic, intelligent, changeless rule of action of the underlying principles of Being (God). Law is the working power that produces results, for God as law is the manner in which God as Principle expresses. "God as law—Principle in action" (The Revealing Word, p. 84).

Divine law is invariable in its action, the same for everyone, in any place, at any time, under all circumstances and conditions.

Just as impersonal Principle creates, sustains, and governs all the universe, so does that Principle individuated in us as the law of our being (our indwelling Lord) govern our life in everything pertaining to us personally. Just as universal Principle is the one Presence and one Power, so is our indwelling Lord all of this for each one of us in a specific, personal way. While any principle is

primarily impersonal, it becomes personal to the channel through which it operates. We are channels through which God operates as Principle, thus He is to each of us a personal, loving Father.

"In the beginning God" (Gen. 1:1)—that is, at the very source or core of our being, Spirit resides. The movement of Spirit is an expanding or unfolding process. "And the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2). Creation came forth from this movement of Spirit.

God cannot be separated from His creation because He is the *cause* of all creation, the Source from which it comes forth. He is the life, substance, and intelligence that maintains and sustains man and the universe. "One God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:6).

Creation, being composed of divine ideas, can never be separated from God-Mind. While there are times in human experience when we may think that God is separated from us because of an appearance in our life that seems to lack some good, we come to see that in reality there can be no absence of Good, because God is the only presence and power (Principle). Further study of spiritual laws reveals to us that what seems to be an absence of good, or separation from God, is a condition that has resulted from a belief in separation in our own mind, due to lack of understanding concerning the nature of God and His relation to us and to the world about us.

"For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38, 39).

What It Means to "Hallow" the name of God

To "hallow" the name of God means to recognize God's nature (name) as wholeness and perfection. To hallow is to consecrate and hold in reverence; to make holy, or whole. The name of God is the *nature* of God, thus to use the name or nature of God only in relation to that which is good is to "hallow" the name of God.

God is to each person whatever that person can conceive Him to be—whatever the person's concept of God is. Regardless of the way one may conceive Him, God is absolute Good.

When Moses received the commission to bring the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, he hesitated concerning his ability and authority. But, we read in Scripture,

"God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel,' 'I AM has sent me to you'" (Exodus 3:14).

Thus we have scriptural authority that God's name is "I AM WHO I AM."

The I AM (Lord) in each of us is our creative power, expressing through our formative power of thought. The business of I AM is to attend to our every call and to bring into manifestation that which we declare by our words—spoken silently or audibly. We have already learned that the I AM is the Lord or law of our being. In using such phrases as "I am sorry" or "I am afraid" we are unthinkingly using the name (or nature) of the Lord to

bring to ourself negative conditions. It is by our words that we identify ourself with the mental causes that produce limited conditions. When we lower the use of the I AM power from the spiritual to the mental only, we become subject to the mental law of cause and effect and will reap the harvest of our negative sowing.

"You do not connect that faraway I AM that inspired Moses with your own little everyday I am . . . Yet there is but one I AM . . . That which says 'I am' in all men, women, and children is identical. It is like the mathematical 1. All the combinations of figures that were ever conceived are but the repetitions of this digit. It is the son of the principle, mathematics. It is inspired by its principle and all the possibilities of that principle are open to it" (Talks on Truth, pp. 76, 77).

No one else in the world can say "I am" for us; another must either say "you are" or "he [or she] is." As we have already brought out in this lesson, I AM is our "identification card." Whether we are using the name I AM in full recognition of its meaning, or using the words "I am" in everyday conversation, we are still identifying ourself with whatever we attach to the words.

Lesson III

Thinking

- 1. The real substance within everything we see is God; all things are one and the same Spirit in different degrees of manifestation; that all the various forms of life are just the same as one life come forth out of the invisible into visible forms; that all the intelligence and all the wisdom in the world are God as wisdom in various degrees of manifestation; that all the love which people feel and express toward others is just a little, so to speak, of God as love come into visibility through the human form.
- 2. When we say there is but one Mind in the entire universe, and that this Mind is God, some persons, having followed understandingly and recognized God as the one Life, one Spirit, one Power, pushing Himself out into various degrees of manifestation through people and things, will at once say: "Yes, that is all plain."
- 3. But someone else will say: "If all the mind there is, is God, then how can I think wrong

thoughts, or have any but God thoughts?"

4. The connection between universal Mind and our own individual minds is one of the most difficult things to put into words, but when it once dawns on one, it is easily seen.

5. There is in reality only one Mind (or Spirit, which is life, intelligence, and so forth) in the universe; and yet there is a sense in which we are individual, or separate, a sense in which we are free wills and not puppets.

6. Man is made up of Spirit, soul, and body. Spirit is the central unchanging "I" of us, the part that since infancy has never changed, and to all eternity never will change. That which some persons call "mortal mind" is the region of the intellect where we do conscious thinking and are free wills. This part of our being is in constant process of changing.

7. In our outspringing from God into the material world, Spirit is inner—one with God; soul is the clothing, as it were, of the Spirit; body is the external clothing of the soul. Yet all are in reality one, the composite man—as steam, water, and ice are one, only in different degrees of condensation. In thinking of ourselves, we must not separate Spirit, soul, and body, but rather hold all as one, if we would be strong and powerful. Man originally lived consciously in the spiritual part of himself. He fell by descending in his consciousness to the external or more material part of himself.

8. "Mortal mind," the term so much used and so distracting to many, is the error consciousness, which gathers its information from the outside world through the five senses. It is what Paul calls "the mind of the flesh" in contradistinction to

spiritual mind; and he flatly says: "The mind of the flesh [believing what the carnal mind says] is death [sorrow, trouble, sickness]; but the mind of the Spirit [ability to still the carnal mind and let the Spirit speak within us] is life and peace."

- 9. The Spirit within you is Divine Mind, the real mind. Without it the human mind would disappear, just as a shadow disappears when the real thing that casts it is removed.
- 10. If you find this subject of human mind and universal Mind puzzling to you, do not worry over it. Just drop it for a time, and as you go on with the lessons, you will find that some day an understanding of it will flash suddenly upon you with perfect clearness.
- 11. There are today two classes of people, so far as mentality goes, who are seeking deliverance out of sickness, trouble, and unhappiness, by spiritual means. One class requires that every statement made be proved by the most elaborate and logical argument, before it can or will be received. The other class is willing at once to "become as little children" (Matt. 18:3) and just be taught how to take the first steps toward pure understanding (or knowledge of Truth as God sees it), and then receives the light by direct revelation from the All-Good. Both are seeking and eventually both will reach the same goal, and neither one should be unduly condemned.
- 12. If you are one who seeks and expects to get any realizing knowledge of spiritual things through argument or reasoning, no matter how scholarly your attainments or how great you are in worldly wisdom, you are a failure in spiritual understanding. You are attempting an utter impossibility—

that of crowding the Infinite into the quart measure of your own intellectual capacity.

- 13. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged" (I Cor. 2:14). Eventually you will find that you are only beating around on the outside of the "kingdom of heaven," though in close proximity to it, and you will then become willing to let your intellect take the place of the little child, without which no man can enter in.
- 14. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath [not will] prepared for them that love him.
- 15. "But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit....
- 16. "For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 2:11).
- 17. For all those who must wade through months and perhaps years of this purely intellectual or mental process, there are today many books to help, and many teachers of metaphysics who are doing noble and praiseworthy work in piloting these earnest seekers after Truth and satisfaction. To them we cry: "All speed!"
- 18. But we believe with Paul that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men" (I Cor. 1:25), and that each man has direct access to all there is in God. We are writing for the "little children" who, without question or discussion, are willing at once to accept and to try a few plain, simple rules, such as Jesus taught the common people, who "heard

him gladly"—rules by which they can find the Christ (or the Divine) within themselves, that through it each man for himself may work out his own salvation from all his troubles.

- 19. In other words, there is a shortcut to the top of the hill; and while there is a good but long, roundabout road for those who need it, we prefer the less laborious means of attaining the same end—by seeking directly the Spirit of truth promised to dwell in us and to lead us into all Truth. My advice is: If you want to make rapid progress in growth toward spiritual understanding, stop reading many books. They only give you someone's opinion about Truth, or a sort of history of the author's experience in seeking Truth. What you want is revelation of Truth in your own soul, and that will never come through the reading of many books.
- 20. Seek light from the Spirit of truth within you. Go alone. Think alone. Seek light alone, and if it does not come at once, do not be discouraged and run off to someone else to get light; for, as we said before, by so doing you get only the opinion of the intellect, and may be then farther away from the Truth you are seeking than ever before; for the mortal mind may make false reports.
- 21. The very Spirit of truth is at your call. "The anointing which ye received of him abideth in you" (I John 2:27). Seek it. Wait patiently for it to "guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13) about all things.
- 22. "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). This is the universal Mind, which makes no mistakes. Still the intellect for the time being, and let universal Mind speak to you;

and when it speaks, though it be but a "still small voice" (I Kings 19:12), you will know that what it says is Truth.

- 23. How will you know? You will know just as you know that you are alive. All the argument in the world to convince you against Truth that comes to you through direct revelation will fall flat and harmless at your side. And the Truth that you know, not simply believe, you can use to help others. That which comes forth through your spirit will reach the very innermost spirit of him to whom you speak.
- 24. What is born from the outside, or intellectual perception, reaches only the intellect of him you would help.
- 25. The intellect that is servant to the real Mind, and when servant (but not when master) is good, loves to argue; but when its information is based on the evidence of the senses and not on the true thoughts of the Divine Mind, it is very fallible and full of error.
- 26. Intellect argues. Spirit takes the deep things of God and reveals Truth to man. One may be true; the other always is true. Spirit does not give opinions about Truth; it is Truth, and it reveals itself.
- 27. Someone has truly said that the merest child who has learned from the depths of his being to say, "Our Father," is infinitely greater than the most intellectual man who has not yet learned it. Paul was a man of gigantic intellect, learned in all the law, a Pharisee of the Pharisees; but after he was spiritually illumined he wrote, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (I Cor. 1:25).

- 28. It does make a great difference in our daily lives what we think about God, about ourselves, about our neighbors. Heretofore, through ignorance of our real selves and of the results of our thinking, we have let our thoughts flow at random. Our minds have been turned toward the external of our being, and nearly all our information has been gotten through our five senses. We have thought wrong because misinformed by these senses, and our troubles and sorrows are the results of our wrong thinking.
- 29. "But," says someone, "I do not see how my thinking evil or wrong thoughts about God, or about anyone, can make me sick or my husband lose his position."
- 30. Well, I will not just now try to explain all the steps by which bad results follow false thinking, but I will just ask you to try thinking true, right thoughts awhile, and see what the result will be.
- 31. Take the thought, "God loves me." Think these words over and over continually for a few days, trying to realize that they are true, and see what the effect will be on your body and circumstances.
- 32. First, you get a new exhilaration of mind, with a great desire and a sense of power to please God; then a quicker, better circulation of blood, with sense of a pleasant warmth in the body, followed by better digestion. Later, as Truth flows out through your being into your surroundings, everybody will begin to manifest a new love for you without your knowing why; and finally, circumstances will begin to change and fall into harmony with your desires, instead of being adverse to

them.

- 33. Everyone knows how strong thoughts of fear or grief have turned hair white in a few hours; how great fear makes the heart beat so rapidly as to seem about to "jump out of the body," this result not being at all dependent on whether there be any real cause of fear or whether it be a purely imaginary cause. Just so, strong negative thoughts may render the blood acid, causing rheumatism. Bearing mental burdens makes more stooped shoulders than does bearing heavy material loads. Believing that God regards us as "miserable sinners," that He is continually watching us and our failures with disapproval, brings utter discouragement and a sort of half-paralyzed condition of mind and body, which means failure in all our undertakings.
- 34. Is it difficult for you to understand why, if God lives in us all the time, He does not keep our thoughts right instead of permitting us through ignorance to drift into wrong thoughts, and so bring trouble on ourselves?
- 35. Well, we are not automatons. Your child will never learn to walk alone if you always do his walking. Because you recognize that the only way for him to be strong, self-reliant in all things—in other words, to become a man—is to throw him on himself, and let him, through experience, come to a knowledge of things for himself, you are not willing to make a mere puppet of him by taking the steps for him, even though you know that he will fall down many times and give himself severe bumps in his ongoing toward perfect physical manhood.
 - 36. We are in process of growth into the highest

spiritual manhood and womanhood. We get many falls and bumps on the way, but only through these, not necessarily by them, can our growth proceed. Father and mother, no matter how strong or deep their love, cannot grow for their children; nor can God, who is Omnipotence, at the center of our being, grow spiritually for us without making of us automatons instead of individuals.

- 37. If you keep your thoughts turned toward the external of yourself, or of others, you will see only the things that are not real, but temporal, and which pass away. All the faults, failures, or lacks in people or circumstances will seem very real to you, and you will be unhappy and sick.
- 38. If you turn your thoughts away from the external toward the spiritual, and let them dwell on the good in yourself and in others, all the apparent evil will first drop out of your thoughts and then out of your life. Paul understood this when he wrote to the Philippians: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8).
- 39. We all can learn how to turn the conscious mind toward universal Mind, or Spirit, within us. We can, by practice, learn how to make this everyday, topsy-turvy, "mind of the flesh" be still and let the mind that is God (all-wisdom, all-love) think in us and out through us.
- 40. Imagine, if you will, a great reservoir, out of which lead innumerable small rivulets or channels. At its farther end each channel opens out into a

small fountain. This fountain is not only being continually filled and replenished from the reservoir but is itself a radiating center whence it gives out in all directions that which it receives, so that all who come within its radius are refreshed and blessed.

- 41. This is our relation to God. Each one of us is a radiating center. Each one, no matter how small or ignorant, is the little fountain at the far end of a channel, the other end of which leads out from all there is in God. This fountain represents the individuality, as separate from the great reservoir—God—and yet as one with Him in that we are constantly fed and renewed from Him, and without Him we are nothing.
- 42. Each of us, no matter how insignificant he may be in the world, may receive from God unlimited good of whatever kind he desires, and radiate it to all about him. But remember, he must radiate if he would receive more. Stagnation is death.
- 43. Oh, I want the simplest mind to grasp the idea that the very wisdom of God—the love, the life, and the power of God are ready and waiting with longing impulse to flow out through us in unlimited degree! When it flows in unusual degree through the intellect of a certain person men exclaim, "What a wonderful mind!" When it flows through the hearts of men it is the love that melts all bitterness, envy, selfishness, jealousy, before it; when it flows through their bodies as life, no disease can withstand its onward march.
- 44. We do not have to be seech God any more than we have to be seech the sun to shine. The sun shines because it is a law of its being to shine, and

it cannot help it. No more can God help pouring into us unlimited wisdom, life, power, all good, because to give is a law of His being. Nothing can hinder Him except our own lack of understanding. The sun may shine ever so brightly, but if we have, through willfulness or ignorance, placed ourselves, or have been placed by our progenitors, in the far corner of a damp, dark cellar, we get neither joy nor comfort from its shining; then to us the sun never shines.

- 45. So we have heretofore known nothing of how to get ourselves out of the cellar of ignorance, doubt, and despair; to our wrong thinking, God has seemed to withhold the life, wisdom, power, we wanted so much, though we sought Him ever so earnestly.
- 46. The sun does not radiate life and warmth today and darkness and chill tomorrow; it cannot, from the nature of its being. Nor does God radiate love at one time, while at other times, anger, wrath, and displeasure flow from His mind toward us.
- 47. "Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet water and bitter? can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs" (James 3:11).
- 48. God is All-Good—always good, always love. He never changes, no matter what we do or may have done. He is always trying to pour more of Himself through us into visibility so as to make us grander, larger, fuller, freer individuals.
- 49. While the child is crying out for its Father-Mother God, the Father-Mother is yearning with infinite tenderness to satisfy the child.

"In the heart of man a cry,
In the heart of God, supply."

COMMENTARY ON "THINKING"

Thinking

Thinking is a process by which the human soul (i.e., the mind or consciousness) is able to handle abstract ideas so as to form a mental "picture" or pattern. Once established in man's mind (subconscious as well as conscious) this pattern becomes a magnet or a "mental equivalent" that is the nucleus for the outer structure. The structure will bear the character of the mind pattern of the individual doing the thinking. "Thought is the process in mind by which substance is acted on by energy, directed by intelligence. Thought is the movement of ideas in mind" (Metaphysical Bible Dictionary, p. 654).

Thinking is our intellect in action, which allows us to reason, to choose, to comprehend, to will, to act. The child is taught to think about the ABC's, about numbers, about objects, and about people in his world, and all the time his intellect is dealing with the ideas represented by these things. All true thinking, which is the right use of our intellect, is for the purpose of building a consciousness of Truth—a consciousness which sees the activity of God in all human events.

God is not responsible for keeping our thoughts right. This responsibility lies with each of us. God created us sons, in His image and after His likeness. The ability to think is a gift to us from Him. It

enables us to use the ideas that are our divine inheritance.

The Law of Thought

"Since man is the offspring of God, made in the image and likeness of Divine Mind, he must express himself under the laws of this great creative Mind. The law of manifestation for man is the law of thought. God ideates: man thinks. One is the completion of the other in mind" (Mysteries of Genesis, p. 12).

The creative power of God moves ideas into expression and manifestation as consciousness, things, conditions, and circumstances. In the structure of human consciousness, the active agent is thought (thinking and feeling) and the spoken word.

When manifest man (a human being) desires a certain condition in his body or in his world, he consciously directs his attention toward it; he thinks about it with the conscious phase of his mind; he feels with his emotional nature (subconscious phase of mind); he speaks the word, silently or audibly; he acts in faith, and the manifestation follows. Man by his thinking, feeling, spoken word directs the creative power of God to build structures, thereby producing conditions, circumstances, and things in his world according to his own beliefs and level of soul unfoldment.

"As man must have an idea before he can bring an idea into manifestation, so it is with the creations of God. When a man builds a house, he builds it first in his mind. He has the idea of a house, he completes the plan in his mind, and then he works it out in manifestation. Thus God created the universe. The 1st chapter of Genesis describes the ideal creation" (Mysteries of Genesis, p. 12).

The Creative Action of Divine Mind

Our Scriptures contain in symbols a significant description of the creative action of Divine Mind. One who studies the Bible merely as a historical record or as an ethical guide fails to sound the depths of these ancient writings.

If we study the 1st chapter of Genesis in the light of Spirit, we find that it may be interpreted symbolically as the creative action of universal Mind in the realm of ideas, and does not pertain to the manifest world anymore than the inventor's idea pertains to the machine which he afterward builds. Keeping in mind the trinity of mind, idea, and expression, we know that creation takes place in the realm of mind and that we can understand the story of creation given in Genesis only by applying it to the real realm in which it belongs.

From a metaphysical standpoint all creation starts first with an idea in Divine Mind. The idea begins to "press out" or "express" itself in human consciousness. It begins its development by drawing to itself thoughts that assist it in its growth toward its own completion or fulfillment. The final step will be manifestation.

The six days of creation described in the 1st chapter of Genesis may be interpreted as six great, ideal projections from Divine Mind, six steps that are necessary in the working out in mind of any ideal. The starting point is like a seed, and this seed

idea must unfold in all its details in mind, in much the same way as the details of his plan unfold in the inventor's or architect's mind before he makes the drawing or blueprint. The assembling together of these ideal projections is climaxed in the creation of "ideal man."

This ideal man is created in the image and after the likeness of God, and he is the lord of creation. To him is given dominion over every created thing. Dominion belongs to every man, but only he exercises it properly who understands himself to be essentially this "ideal man." So man is to take dominion and have authority over all the ideas that are included in his own divine nature, "ideal man," the image of God—God's idea of Himself. Man's dominion begins in the realm of ideas. Through inspiration from his source, Divine Mind, he is to familiarize himself with and learn the character and nature of all the ideas that make up the nature of God (which is his own true nature).

The Three Fields of Mind Action

The three fields of mind action are Superconscious, subconscious, and conscious. The Superconscious is the Christ Mind; the I AM; the God Presence in every man. We refer to man's threefold nature as spirit, soul, body. The first phase—spirit—is called by many names—Christ, I AM, divine center, the "Father within," Lord, law of our being, and Superconsciousness. While Divine Mind is the realm of divine ideas for all creation, this Mind indwells us as the Superconscious or Christ Mind, and is thus the realm of divine ideas for us individually. The Superconscious is the realm of

pure knowing.

The term *superconscious* indicates that the Superconscious Mind is of a higher order than our conscious and subconscious phases of mind. These two activities of our soul or mind are the *users* of the ideas of the Superconscious or Christ Mind.

Man responds to the ideals of God by turning to the Superconscious or Christ Mind and laying hold of the ideas that make up his divine inheritance. Without the movement of ideas in mind, there could be no consciousness. The use of the ideas by our thinking and feeling will be determined by our stage of soul unfoldment, and by the needs of mind, body, and affairs. It is the existence of the Superconscious phase of mind that makes possible the overcoming of the world.

The conscious phase of mind is the thinking faculty, the reasoning phase, the realm of conscious knowing in the individual soul. It is often termed "the intellect." In this phase man chooses, examines, judges, analyzes, wills, selects, decides, forms, deducts, rejects, accepts, and concludes, as he deals with the ideas received from the Superconscious.

It is the function of the conscious phase of mind, or intellect, to discriminate between the general and the specific; to note differences as well as similarities in persons, religions, sciences, things, circumstances, and conditions. This phase of mind makes man a rational human being, enabling him to do rational thinking. It is this phase that allows man ultimately to know himself to be the son of God. Through this function man may look out on the world of appearances, but he may also focus his attention on the divine Presence, Spirit, within

himself. As he consciously handles the ideas to which he is heir, he may examine the how and why of life.

The subconscious phase of mind is the feeling nature of each individual, as well as the receptacle of mental images. Thus we term it the seat of memory. As the lesson has already emphasized, the subconscious phase of mind handles the involuntary activities of the organism.

The subconscious is the secondary cause, the reactive phase of mind in the individual. We call its action "the formative power of thought" as it works in substance to bring forth conditions in man's body and affairs according to the suggestions given it by the conscious phase of mind.

The conscious phase takes the initiative and impresses the subconscious with thoughts and attitudes, and the subconscious will carry out the suggestions faithfully. The conscious phase sends its directives to the subconscious which must accept them and carry them out, because the subconscious has no power of its own to do its own selecting.

The conscious phase acts, but the subconscious reacts; the conscious phase makes the impression, but the subconscious produces the manifestation; the conscious phase decides what to do, and the subconscious phase does it. The most significant use of the conscious phase of mind is willingly to open the consciousness to the inspiration of the Superconscious.

What we think and how we think is, of course, very important. What and how we think affects the way we feel, and these two actions indicate visibly how we are using or directing the creative power of

God. We are learning that every thought projects a form, or produces an effect, so in our freedom to think we make our own concepts about God, about ourself, about others, and about our world in general. These concepts, by the law of mind action ("like begets like"—Phil. 4:8), produce effects in our body, our affairs, our world, that correspond to the character of our thoughts (concepts).

Lesson IV

The Secret Place of The Most High

- 1. There is nothing the human heart so longs for, so cries out after, as to know God, "whom to know aright is life eternal."
- 2. With a restlessness that is pitiful to see, people are ever shifting from one thing to another, always hoping to find rest and satisfaction in some anticipated accomplishment or possession. Men fancy that they want houses and lands, great learning or power. They pursue these things and gain them, only to find themselves still restless, still unsatisfied.
- 3. At the great heart of humanity there is a deep and awful homesickness that never has been and never can be satisfied with anything less than a clear, vivid consciousness of the indwelling presence of God, our Father. In all ages, earnest men and women who have recognized this inner hunger as the heart's cry after God have left seeking after things, and have sought, by devoted worship and by service to others, to enter into this conscious-

ness; but few have succeeded in reaching the promised place where their "joy" is "full" (John 16:24). Others have hoped and feared alternately; they have tried, with the best knowledge they possessed, to "work out" their "own salvation" (Phil. 2:12), not yet having learned that there must be an inworking as well as an outworking. "By grace [or free gift] have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves [nor of any human working], it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory" (Eph. 2:8, 9).

4. To him who "dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High," there is promised immunity from the "deadly pestilence" and "the snare of the fowler," from "the terror by night," and "the arrow that flieth by day" (Psalms 91); and even immunity from fear of these things. Oh, the awfully paralyzing effect of fear and evil! It makes us helpless as babes. It makes us pygmies, whereas we might be giants were we only free from it. It is at the root of all our failures, of nearly all sickness, poverty, and distress. But we have the promise of deliverance from even the fear and evil when we are in the "secret place." "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night" (Psalms 91:5), and so forth.

"In the day of trouble he will keep me secretly in his pavilion:

In the covert of his tabernacle will he hide me" (Psalms 27:5).

"In the covert of thy presence wilt thou hide them from the plottings of man:

Thou wilt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues" (Psalms 31:20).

5. The secret place! Why called a secret place?

What is it? Where may we find it? How abide in it?

6. It is a secret place because it is a place of meeting between the Christ at the center of your being, and your consciousness—a hidden place into which no outside person can either induct you or enter himself. We must drop the idea that this place of realization of our divinity can be given to us by any human being. No one can come into it from the outside. Hundreds of earnest persons are seeking, night and day, to get this inner revealing. They run from teacher to teacher, many of them making the most frantic efforts to meet the financial obligations thus incurred.

7. You may study with human teachers and from man-made books until doomsday; you may get all the theological lore of the ages; you may understand intellectually all the statements of Truth, and be able to prate healing formulas as glibly as oil flows; but until there is a definite inner revealing of the reality of an indwelling Christ through whom and by whom come life, health, peace, power, all things—aye, who is all things—you have not yet found "the friendship of Jehovah" (Psalms 25:14).

8. In order to gain this knowledge—this consciousness of God within themselves—many are willing (and wisely so, for this is greater than all other knowledge) to spend all they possess. Even Paul, after twenty-five years of service and of most marvelous preaching, said: "I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord... and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ" (or the consciousness of His divine self) (Phil. 3:8).

9. Beloved, that which you so earnestly desire

will never be found by your seeking it through the mental side alone, any more than it has heretofore been found through the emotional side alone. Intuition and intellect are meant to travel together, intuition always holding the reins to guide intellect. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah" (Isa. 1:18). If you have been thus far on the way cultivating and enlarging only the mental side of Truth, as probably is the case, you need, in order to come into the fullness of understanding, to let the mental, the reasoning side rest awhile. "Become as little children" (Matt. 18:3), and, learning how to be still, listen to that which the Father will say to you through the intuitional part of your being. The light that you so crave will come out of the deep silence and become manifest to you from within yourself, if you will but keep still and look for it from that source.

- 10. And conscious knowledge of an indwelling God, which we so crave, is that of which Paul wrote to the Colossians, as "the mystery which hath been hid for ages and generations; but now hath it been manifested . . . Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:26, 27). "The secret place of the Most High" (Psalms 91:1), where each one of us may dwell and be safe from all harm or fear of evil, is the point of mystical union between man and Spirit (or God in us), wherein we no longer believe, but know, that God in Christ abides always at the center of our being as our perfect health, deliverance, prosperity, power, ready to come forth into manifestation at any moment we claim it. We know it. We know it. We feel our oneness with the Father, and we manifest this oneness.
 - 11. To possess the secret of anything gives one

power over it. This personal, conscious knowledge of the Father in us is the secret that is the key to all power. What we want is the revelation to us of this marvelous "secret." What will give it to us—who can give it to us except Him, the "Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father" (John 15:26)? Surely none other. That which God would say to you and do through you is a great secret that no man on the face of the earth knows, or ever will know, except yourself as it is revealed to you by the Spirit that is in you. The secret that He tells me is not revealed to you, nor yours to me; but each man must, after all is said and done, deal directly with the Father through the Son within himself.

- 12. Secrets are not told upon the housetop; nor is it possible to pass this, the greatest of secrets, from one to another. God, the creator of our being, must Himself whisper it to each man living in the very innermost of himself. "To him that overcometh [or is consciously in process of overcoming], to him will I give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone [or a mind like a clean white tablet], and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it" (Rev. 2:17). It is so secret that it cannot even be put into human language or repeated by human lips.
- 13. What you want today and what I want is that the words that we have learned to say as Truth be made alive to us. We want a revelation of God in us as life, to be made to our own personal consciousness as health. We no longer care to have somebody just tell us the words from the outside. We want a revelation of God as love within us, so

that our whole being will be filled and thrilled with love—a love that will not have to be pumped up by a determined effort because we know that it is right to love and wrong not to love, but a love that will flow with the spontaneity and fullness of an artesian well, because it is so full at the bottom that it must flow out.

- 14. What we want today is a revelation to our consciousness of God within us as omnipotent power, so that we can, by a word—or a look—"accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:11). We want the manifestation to us of the Father in us, so that we can know Him personally. We want to be conscious of God working in us "both to will and to work" (Phil. 2:13), so that we may "work out" our "salvation" (Phil. 2:12). We have been learning how to do the outworking, but have now come to a point where we must learn more of how to place ourselves in an attitude where we can each be conscious of the divine inner working.
- 15. Mary talked with the risen Jesus, supposing that He was the gardener, until suddenly, as He spoke her name, there flashed into her consciousness a ray of pure intuition, and in an instant the revelation of His identity was made to her.
- 16. According to the same sacred history, Thomas Didymus had walked daily for three years with the most wonderful teacher of spiritual things that has ever lived. He had watched this teacher's life and had been partaker of His very presence, physical and mental. He had had just what you and I have thus far received of mental training and external teaching. But there came a time when there was an inner revealing that made him

exclaim, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). The secret name, which no other man could know for him, had that moment been given to him. There had come, in the twinkling of an eye, the manifestation to his consciousness of the Father in him as his Lord and His God. No longer simply our Father and our Lord, but my Lord and my God—my divine self revealed to me personally.

- 17. Is not this that which you are craving?
- 18. Each man must come to a time when he no longer seeks external helps, when he knows that the inner revelation of "my Lord and my God" to his consciousness can come to him only through an indwelling power that has been there all the time, waiting with infinite longing and patience to reveal the Father to the child.
- 19. This revelation will never come through the intellect of man to the consciousness, but must ever come through the intuitional to the intellect as a manifestation of Spirit to man. "The natural man receiveth not [nor can it impart them] the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged" (I Cor. 2:14), and they must be spiritually imparted.
- 20. In our eagerness we have waited upon every source that we could reach for the light that we want. Because we have not known how to wait upon Spirit within us for the desired revelation, we have run to and fro. Let no one misunderstand me in what I say about withdrawing himself from teachers. Teachers are good and are necessary, up to a certain point. "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not

heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14).

- 21. Books and lectures are good, teachers are good, but you must learn for yourself that Christ, the Son of God, lives in you; that He within you is your light and life and all. When you have once grasped this beyond a doubt with the intellect, you cease looking to teachers to bring you spiritual insight. That Christ lives in you, Spirit itself must reveal to you. Teachers talk about the light, but the light itself must flash into the darkness before you can see the light.
- 22. Had the Master remained with the apostles, I doubt whether they would ever have gotten beyond hanging on His words and following in the footsteps of His personality.
- 23. Jesus knew that His treatments for spiritual illumination, given to His apostles from His recognition of Truth, would act in them as a seed thought, but He also knew that each man must for himself wait upon God for the inner illumination which is lasting and real. God alone can whisper the secret to each one separately.
- 24. The induement of power was not to come to them by the spoken word through another personality, not even through that of Jesus, with His great spiritual power and discernment. It was to come from "on high" (Isa. 32:15) to each individual consciousness. It was the "promise of the Father, which...ye heard from me" (Acts 1:4). He had merely told them about it, but had no power to give it to them.
- 25. So to each of us this spiritual illumination that we are crying out after, this indument of power for which we are willing to sell all that we

have, must come from "on high," that is, to the consciousness from the Spirit within our being. This is the secret that the Father longs with an infinite yearning to reveal to each individual. It is because of the Father's desire within us to show us the secret that we desire the revelation. It is the purpose for which we came into the world—that we might grow step by step, as we are doing, to the place where we could bear to have the secret of His inner abiding revealed to us.

- 26. Do not be confused by seeming contradictions in the lessons. I have said heretofore that too much introspection is not good. I repeat it; for there are those who, in earnest desire to know God, are always seeking light for themselves, but neglect to use that which they already have to help others.
- 27. There must be an equal conscious receiving from the Father and giving out to the world, a perfect equilibrium between the inflowing and the outgiving, to keep perfect harmony. We must each learn how to wait renewedly upon God for the infilling, and then go and give out to every creature that which we have received, as Spirit leads us to give, either in preaching, teaching, or silently living the Truth. That which fills us will radiate from us without effort right in the place in life where we stand.
- 28. In nearly all teaching of Truth from the purely mental side, there is much said about the working out of our salvation by the holding of right thoughts, by denials and affirmations. This is all good. But there is another side that we need to know a little more about. We must learn how to be still and let Spirit, the I AM, work in us, that we

may indeed be made "a new creature" (Gal. 6:15), that we may have the mind of Christ in all things.

- 29. When you have learned how to abandon yourself to infinite Spirit, and have seasons of doing this daily, you will be surprised at the marvelous change that will be wrought in you without any conscious effort of your own.
- 30. It will search far below your conscious mind, and root out things in your nature of which you have scarcely been conscious, simply because they have lain latent there, waiting for something to bring them out. It will work into your consciousness light, and life, and love, and all good, perfectly filling all your lack while you just quietly wait and receive. Of the practical steps in this direction we will speak in another lesson.
- 31. Paul, who had learned this way of faith, this way of being still and letting the I AM work itself into his conscious mind as the fullness of all his needs, was neither afraid nor ashamed to say:
- 32. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and height, and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled unto all the fulness of God" (Eph. 3:14-19).
- 33. And then he gives an ascription: "Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20).

COMMENTARY ON "THE SECRET PLACE OF THE MOST HIGH"

The Great Masquerade

Our longing for God often masquerades under the guise of other desires. No matter what things we desire, what ambitions we may have, or what persons we may want in our life, all of these represent the deep longing of the soul for God. We long to know God as love, as life, as power, as peace, as beauty, as security, as companionship, but in most instances this longing is first interpreted as the desire for things.

However earnestly we seek in the external world, we are always unsatisfied and restless until we have a consciousness of the indwelling Father. No matter how near and dear to us other persons may be, always we are searching for something deeper, which is the conscious companionship of God within ourself. We can come consciously into the presence of God, so that God is no longer a Being afar off, removed from our everyday life. When we do attain to the realization of God's presence indwelling, we are in "the secret place of the Most High" (Psalms 91:1). "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God" (Psalms 42:2).

"The hungering for God that is felt by man in his soul is really God hungering to express eternal life through man. God is always seeking to awaken man's very soul to His mighty presence. He thus expands the consciousness, offering man an opportunity more fully and more perfectly to express Him" (Teach Us to Pray, p. 20).

What Is the Secret Place?

"What we need to know above all is that there is a place within our soul where we can consciously meet God and receive a flood of new life into not only our mind but also our body" (Teach Us to Pray, p. 5).

The "secret place of the Most High" is the name the Psalmist uses to designate the "place" within our own being where we may retire to feel God's presence and power. It is where human consciousness meets with the divine consciousness, and Spirit meets spirit.

"Speak to Him thou for He hears, And Spirit with spirit can meet, Closer is He than breathing, And nearer than hands and feet."

(The Higher Pantheism, Tennyson.)

God is as close to us as our own breath, for God is our life, our breath, all that we are in Truth.

Can anyone say how close the beauty and perfume of the rose are to the rose? Or can we say how close the song is to the singer? Just as close to us is God. Our Scripture tells us,

"He is not far from each one of us: for in him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:27, 28).

Also we are told,

"We are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in

them" (II Cor. 6:16).

In our metaphysical study we find that the "secret place" can be explained simply as that phase of prayer when God "speaks" and we "listen" to His revelations.

"When we pray in spiritual understanding, this highest realm of man's mind contacts universal, impersonal Mind; the very mind of God is joined to the mind of man. God answers our prayers in ideas, thoughts, words; these are translated into the outer realms, in time and condition" (Christian Healing, p. 78).

In the previous lesson of this course we studied our threefold nature as spirit-soul-body. We come to realize that we are a son of God, then we see that the "secret place" is the place in consciousness where the soul becomes consciously aware of this sonship. The "secret place" is God's own Presence in us that belongs to each of us alone, a place where no one else can enter. It is that contact between soul and spirit when we lay hold of the divine ideas that manifest as health, joy, wisdom, love, supply. The 91st Psalm tells us of all the good that accrues when we dwell in this "secret place." We are told how protected we shall be from every kind of error, especially from fear, and the psalm ends triumphantly with the words,

"With long life will I satisfy him

And show him my salvation" (Psalms 91:16).

We need to know what this "secret place" is and how it is contacted within our own being, in order to avail ourself of the good (in the form of ideas) that awaits our claim.

"'The kingdom of God is within you.' . . . it

is to this inner center that he should direct his attention when praying or meditating. David called this spiritual center of the soul 'the secret place of the Most High,' and all the defense and power of the 91st Psalm is promised to the one who dwells in the consciousness of the Almighty within" (Jesus Christ Heals, p. 77).

In the "secret place of the Most High" within our own being, we appropriate the divine ideas that belong to God consciousness. It is in this "secret place" of prayer that we learn that the will of our Father is for our highest good. Only in the stillness can the full revelation come to our soul. For prayer to be effectual, we need to abide in the realization that our true place is in the one creative Mind, where all is peace and harmony. Therefore, we must learn to keep silence before God; to still the false reports of the senses that impinge on our consciousness, so that we may listen to the "still small voice" that will teach us all things—even the deep things of God.

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee" (Matt. 6:6).

The only "place" that we can turn to for our revelations of Truth is this "secret place of the Most High" within ourself. We are grateful for all external helps that have placed our feet firmly on the path which leads us to this "secret place," whether they be books, teachers, symbols, or even our outer experiences. However, no true teacher wants a student to rely wholly on him, but ever

turns that one toward attaining knowledge of the indwelling Spirit within himself.

Knowing about God, or Knowing God

Being in the secret place of the Most High is being consciously one with "the Father." Conscious oneness with the Father means that we are able to feel—not merely think about—the God presence within. With the revelation that God is immanent in us, we come to know with deep feeling that our true nature is one with the God nature. This realization makes us want to shed all of our erroneous attitudes and limited beliefs.

Every person is one with God, for God is the only Creator and is always one with His creation. However, nothing is truly ours until we are conscious of it and feel it as a part of ourself. Webster's dictionary says, "Conscious applies primarily to that which is felt as within, aware, to that which is perceived as without, oneself." We may study about God and His relationship to us. This will undoubtedly make us intellectually aware of our oneness with God. Learning the truth that God is the one Creator and we are His offspring is not difficult; this is something that can be accepted from an intellectual standpoint. However, there is a vast difference between merely being intellectually aware of Truth principles and actually knowing Truth (God) and rightly using the principles. We can see, then, that we have to add feeling to our thinking in order to reach the state of knowing that is "conscious oneness with the Father."

We may know about a person, but we do not really know him until we are acquainted with him.

We may know *about* our oneness with God, but until we are acquainted with Him we are not really conscious of this oneness. We become acquainted with God by meeting Him in prayer.

True prayer, which we shall consider in detail in a later lesson, is conscious communion with God in the "secret place" within ourself. It is our way of raising our consciousness to a full awareness of God's presence, thus preparing our mind to accept the ideas (attributes) of God that are ours by divine birthright. Therefore, when we pray aright our soul is being "fed" by spiritual patterns in the form of divine ideas that will manifest as the needed things in our life. The influx of these ideas (patterns) will show forth in a completely new way.

The silence, which we shall also discuss later, is a term Unity uses to describe our conscious contact with God in the "secret place of the Most High," when we feel perfect oneness with God, when we absorb the "inspiration of the Almighty" (Job 32:8 A.V.).

We need to keep in mind that when we use the term "the silence" we should think of it in its two-fold nature: it is the *process* that brings us into "the secret place of the Most High" and it is the actual experience we have in the "secret place."

When in the silence itself, we no longer merely think about God and His ideas, nor even about our relationship to Him. The silence itself is not even the time when we "talk" to God and ask for things, but it is that period when we listen as God "speaks" to us, giving us the ideas that will, through the law of mind action, produce the things we desire.

From this contact with our Father, good and practical results will follow. We will begin to face courageously the things that have to be met in the world about us, for our whole attitude toward them has changed.

The Ultimate Nourishment

It must be kept in mind that the term secret place is an image used by Old Testament writers to talk about the inner place of meeting between man and God. Another image which is used is that of a place of nourishment.

According to our teaching, "bread" is representative of all the divine ideas that "feed" the soul. These ideas inhere in divine substance, and the following from *The Revealing Word* (page 29) covers this point very well:

"Our daily bread is the sustenance for spirit, mind, and body. Some of this daily bread is appropriated in the form of food. There is substance in words of Truth, and this substance is appropriated by prayer and meditation on Truth."

Most people feel it is vital to feed the body daily with physical food, and certain periods are set aside for mealtimes. When one becomes aware of the needs of the soul, he realizes that the soul (*i.e.*, the mind) has need of its "daily bread" in the form of divine ideas, otherwise the soul is starved for the only sustenance upon which it can really "feed."

Bread has been referred to as the "staff of life." A staff is a stick, carried in the hand, upon which one may lean for support. In Truth study, divine ideas are the support that God has provided for all

states of man's being.

We are threefold beings—spirit, soul, body—and each phase of our nature has need of its special food; needs to be nourished, sustained, and satisfied in order that we may be channels for the expression and manifestation of the God nature.

Let us consider other words of Scripture related to food:

"It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4).

"He...fed you with manna, which you did not know...that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone" (Deut. 8:3).

"Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life" (John 6:27).

"I am the bread of life... This is the bread which comes down from heaven" (John 6:48, 50).

From these sayings it is clear that our concern should be to feed, through prayer, upon the Word of God—the I AM—the living substance that is within every human being, providing him with the necessary sustenance for both the inner and outer life.

To sum up the meaning of "our daily bread," we say that it is the spiritual ideas, the inspirations through which we enlarge our consciousness of God and His creatures. It is through "our daily bread" that we have the courage and the strength to meet our experiences as opportunities to do God's will and thus to make Him manifest in the

world of visibility.

The Fourth Dimension

Another way in which the experience in the "secret place" has been described by writers on the subject is as the fourth dimension.

The fourth dimension is the realm of divine ideas—the kingdom of the heavens. This is referred to by Charles Fillmore on page 170 of *Keep a True Lent*:

"The fourth dimension is that which embraces and encompasses the other three; it is realization, the doing away with time and space and all conditions. It is the process in which forms lose their apartness and become one under divine law... when we invoke the aid of the Christ in us we go beyond reason into the realm of pure realization...

"The one way to enter the realm of the fourth dimension, or of realization, is through scientific prayer, commonly named 'the silence.' " (This will be dealt with in greater detail in the next volume.)

Looking up in prayer, entering the "inner chamber," going up "into the mountain," the gathering of the disciples in the upper room, rising mentally into the spiritual realm, dwelling "in the secret place of the Most High"—these all testify in symbolism to the highest place in consciousness—the Christ consciousness—which man can conceive and to which he can ascend.

Lesson V

The Divinity of Man

- 1. We have learned that man is created in the image and after the likeness of God, the one Mind. Man forms states of consciousness in this one Mind by his thinking and feeling. By studying the activity of his own mind (his consciousness) he can find out how the one Mind creates.
- 2. Ideas are begotten or generated in the one Mind, eternal Omniscience, becoming causes from which all that is, is produced. Mind is the matrix of all wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. Out of the one Mind, ideas arise and are born in the consciousness, asking for expression, asking to be recognized and accepted. When an idea comes into consciousness it is filled with creative power, and is on its way into manifestation, which it attains if given consent by the will of the individual.
- 3. Before there could be a man, there had to be an *idea* of man. God, the Father, Divine Mind, created the idea of man, and this Idea is His Son, the offspring of His Mind, the perfect-man idea.

The Son is the I AM, Christ, the Word, the Lord, the only begotten of the Father; metaphysically, the name "Son of God" is given to this Idea because it proceeds from the Father. The Son, being the expressed image-likeness of the Father, is perfect, even as the Father is perfect. All that we find in Divine Mind, we find in the Idea, in the offspring, in the Son, who "is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation" (Col. 1:15). "For in him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily" (Col. 2:9).

- 4. All that Divine Mind, the Father, ever generates in man's consciousness is the idea, and this idea is the *cosmic creative power* that is active in Omnipresence. It is the image or seed-idea that is hidden in all forms of life, and which causes the expression in the invisible and the manifestation in the visible realms. In its various degrees of activity in man it is known as *Christ*, *Jesus*, and *Jesus Christ*.
- 5. From the historical standpoint the terms Christ, Jesus, and Jesus Christ are names or titles that are applied to the Man of Nazareth who, according to the Christians, was the fulfillment of the Jewish prophecy of a Messiah (Isaiah 9:6, 7), the Man born in Bethlehem of Judea (Matt. 1:18-25, Matt. 2:1), who grew up in the city of Nazareth (Matt. 2:23); who performed all manner of miracles (Matt. 11:1-5); who taught a relationship between God and man as Father and Son (John 10:30, John 17:1,21); who is our Elder Brother (Matt. 6:9, Matt. 23:9); who was the Great Physician (Matt. 12:15, Matt. 14:14); who was our Friend (John 15:14); our Way-Shower (John 14:6, Luke 9:59); the Great Overcomer (John 16:33);

who was crucified in Jerusalem (John 19:16); was resurrected from the dead (John 20:1-31), was the inspiration of and the chief character in the Four Gospels of the New Testament (Matt., Mark, Luke and John); the guiding light to Paul in his great missionary journeys (Acts 9:10, 20, Romans 1:1, I Cor. 1:1, Eph. 1:1); and the voice of revelation heard by John, the writer of the book of the Revelation.

- 6. From the metaphysicial or the spiritual standpoint, the terms *Christ*, *Jesus*, and *Jesus Christ* represent spiritual principles and laws that are eternal and omnipresent. They were active and they found fulfillment in the man Jesus of Nazareth. They are in every human being and will find fulfillment in everyone, when the same spirit of devotion and obedience is cultivated in the mind and heart of each individual.
- 7. Christ is the image of God, the Word, the Son, the Law, the pattern of perfection in each person.
- 8. Christ is the composite Idea that contains all the divine ideas that are necessary in the unfoldment, development, evolution and expression of a self-conscious spiritual man. Christ is the "seed of God" that is able to reproduce itself out of the substance inhering within it. Christ is spiritual man, I AM, Jehovah God, the Lord God, God's idea of perfect man.
- 9. The Jesus aspect of every person is the understanding use of the Christ principle, the understanding use of the pattern of perfection.
- 10. Jesus represents the energy and the understanding to bring forth in the visible realm all that is in the "seed," the Christ. Jesus is the growth of

the seed. Jesus is the unfolding and the developing of all the qualities or ideas of Christ. One might have the pattern and all the necessary substance to make something, but unless there were an understanding and use of both, nothing would be produced. There could be a perfect seed, but unless that seed were planted and given an opportunity to grow, it would never produce fruit. Jesus symbolizes the perfect response and obedience to the law of life, the law of growth and unfoldment. Jesus stands for the individual unfoldment and evolution of the Christ, the "seed of God."

- 11. "Jesus is the name of the illumined personality. To the metaphysical Christian—that is, to him who studies the spiritual man—Christ is the name of the supermind and Jesus is the name of the illumined personal consciousness" (Jesus Christ Heals, p. 10).
- 12. Jesus Christ is "the Word [which] became flesh" (John 1:14).
- 13. Jesus Christ, metaphysically, is the perfect fulfillment in man that is manifested as the result of the conscious union of the Christ idea and the Jesus activity in the human consciousness. As God is eternal, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, so also is the Christ. We do not always readily grasp this because we have been accustomed to think of the ministry of the Son as limited to the few years during which the Christ was manifested in the physical form of the man who walked in Palestine. As an idea of God, or as the creative power in the Father-Mind, the Son, or Christ, has always existed.
- 14. "In the beginning was the Word [Logos]" (John 1:1). Logos is the Christ, the Son, the living

Word, the creative or working power of God. In this course when we write "Word" with a capital "W" we are referring to God's creative power by which all things are made, "and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). This is the first aspect of the Word, the "God said" of Genesis. It is the creative power inherent in God Mind. The other aspect is the Word emanating from God as spiritual man, the I AM, Christ, Son, Logos. It is this that we refer to in this lesson as the divinity of man.

15. In God is the creative power that ideates the plan that He conceived "in the beginning." The whole Spirit of God (the Holy Spirit) moving upon substance then brings forth every facet of the plan by His Word or creative power. The culmination of this "God said" is spiritual man, the complete Word of Divine Mind, containing all of the nature of God.

16. Jesus continually identified Himself with and as the Son, and not with the limitations of personality. For He said, "I am the Son of God." This constant identification with the Father was the secret of His power and of His success in overcoming all adverse conditions, including death, for He thus appropriated in His own consciousness the presence, power, and light of the Father-Mind. He demonstrated the highest type of embodiment. He is the standard for every individual to follow. If one's life does not show forth harmony and wholeness he can, by appropriating the Christ ideas in his thoughts and feelings, build a new consciousness that will produce desirable results according to the high standard of Jesus Christ.

17. When quickened in spiritual understanding,

we know both the Father and the Son, not only as abstract principles but as our own indwelling life, substance, and intelligence. We know that since we are the offspring of God, made in His image and after His likeness, we are the sons of God, and Jesus is our Elder Brother. He came and taught us of the Father and of our true relation to Him as sons of God. By His living words and example He made it possible for us to be quickened to a consciousness of the Christ in us, the hope of glory. (Col. 1:27) Jesus came to open the minds that are blind with ignorance and in bondage to the belief in materiality, that we might behold the glory of our own indwelling Christ.

- 18. God's idea of man is that man shall express the life, love, substance, intelligence, power, and strength of Divine Mind. Jesus realized this when He said to Pilate, "For this was I born, and for this end I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth" (John 18:37).
- 19. Divine Mind seeks to interact and intercommune with man's mind through the perfect Idea, the Christ, to the end that man shall be consciously one with God in actuality as well as in the ideas. It is through manifest man or human beings that the attributes or ideas of Being (God) are brought into manifestation, and in order to manifest Christ (man's innate perfection), man must consciously identify himself with that perfection (the Father in him) in the same way that Jesus did. "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). Manidentifies himself with the Father as Jesus did, by recognizing his spiritual nature as the Son of God, the image of God, and by knowing that he has within him as potentialities all the qualities of God.

Through the wise and loving use of these God qualities or ideas, he brings forth the likeness of God in the flesh; he *proves* his oneness with God in every thought, feeling, word, action, and reaction.

- 20. Man is to abide or dwell continuously in the same spiritual consciousness in which Jesus dwelt and to let His teachings abide in him. "Have this mind among yourselves which you have in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). Jesus was always conscious of the omnipresent life, the enduring strength, the unfailing love, the eternal substance, the perfect wisdom, and the omnipotence of God. He realized His oneness with the Father in this way. His words were expressions of living ideas and these ideas must abide in man's consciousness where, as seed, they shall spring up and bear much fruit.
- 21. When we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask in the nature of His divine Presence. We also ask in the name or nature of the image-likeness within each one of us, and in an attitude of willingness to submit our unfolding consciousness to the guidance, direction, and teaching of the Holy Spirit. In this phase of spiritual attainment, "Ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7), because to ask in this consciousness is to ask in His nature or name, which is I AM.
- 22. When we seek, find, enter into, and abide in this Son-of-God consciousness, we shall experience the more abundant life. In the Jesus Christ consciousness is all power. "All authority in heaven [mind] and on earth [body] has been given to me" (Matt. 28:18).
- 23. In this Jesus Christ consciousness, we find that perfect love fulfills the law. "God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God

abides in him" (I John 4:16).

- 24. In Jesus Christ we lay hold of and become consciously one with the very life, substance, and intelligence of Spirit. Man is in Truth the Son of God, the expresser of divine ideas, and his business is to establish God activity everywhere. Until he consciously recognizes his relationship and establishes his conscious connection with the Father, he is not a free channel through which God (Good) may flow.
- 25. As our mind (conscious phase or intellect) and our heart (subconscious phase or feeling nature) are cleansed of untrue thoughts and feelings, our body will take on the life and light of our innate divinity. Charles Fillmore compared this experience to the transfiguration of Jesus when he described it as a "change of appearance that takes place as one experiences the full flow of divine power through his being."
- 26. In Unity's metaphysical teachings the divinity of man is also understood as I AM. whereas manifest man is spoken of as "I will." The meaning of I AM is synonymous with the meaning of the term Christ as referred to in previous paragraphs. I AM is the Lord God of the Old Testament, and "I will" is the Adam man. One represents the inner man, and the other the outer, or formed man. It is the I AM that forms and breathes into the "I will" man "the breath of life" (Gen. 2:7). In the realm of the ideal, we are I AM; when we are expressing and interpreting the ideas of Divine Mind in our thoughts and in our acts, we are "I will." The I AM is the archetype, the perfect pattern, the reproduction of God. It is that spirit which is implanted in each human being and which

is to unfold into the likeness of all that is God's nature. Manifest man is in a state of becoming; he is unfolding according to his stage of enlightenment. Just to the extent that he awakens, or to the extent that he wills to receive these divine ideas, they are revealed to him. Man's part is to form them, or make them manifest in the physical realm.

- 27. I AM is the preexistent spiritual *idea of God in man*; it is that which holds man together as an entity. The body is held together as an aggregation of ideas and forces by the power of the central I AM.
- 28. Man must know this truth about himself and not rest in the false belief that he is only what he appears to be. He must consciously know himself as he is in Divine Mind. As he discovers the truth of his being, he will in like degree throw off the limitations that he has accumulated through turning his attention away from his true source.
- 29. The ideal man comes forth through "manifest man" in thinking, feeling, speaking, acting, and reacting. Through man God is bringing into outward manifestation that which exists in the ideal. To measure up to his possibilities, man must understand divine law and his relation to it.
- 30. Jesus Christ understood God and man. He not only recognized man's relation to God as son but He knew what man's true work is in expressing that sonship. When "manifest man" looks at the universe in which he lives, he often discounts his own value to the Creator. He thinks he is only here for a brief span in which time he must strive for material possessions, must "make a living." When enlightenment comes, man sees that life is eternal;

that he need not strive for material possessions and position for they are the results of seeking God's kingdom (realm of divine ideas) and His righteousness (right use of the ideas). He realizes that he is not here to "make a living"; as Charles Fillmore once expressed it, "Man is here to live his making and his making will make his living."

- 31. Another name for the divinity of man is "Logos" or the "Word." Many persons have questioned the use of this term in relation to metaphysics. The word logos comes to us from the Greek language. Some early Greek philosophers regarded the Logos as the rational principle of the universe. When this term was introduced into the principles of the Christian religion it had reference to the second person of the Holy Trinity, considered as the expression or incarnation of divine reason. The Logos is understood as the mediator between man and God, or between the human consciousness and the universal God consciousness (Divine Mind) which Jesus always spoke of as the Father; the Origin and Source of all ideas.
- 32. The divine Logos, which is God in His capacity of creative power, includes all the essential characteristics of Being, with the potential power to express them. The Word, inhering in God, is experienced in man as the urge or desire for a full, free expression of All-Good. Perhaps one of the simplest and clearest definitions of the Word is to be found in Talks on Truth, by Charles Fillmore, page 68: "To produce works, there must be a working power. This is exactly what the Word is—the working power of God." Thus we come to realize that as the second aspect of the Holy Trinity or the Godhead (God the Father, God the Son, God

the Holy Spirit), the Word is also the creative *Idea* of God Mind or Divine Mind, the Son of God, spiritual man, termed also the Christ, the I AM. So each human being may say of his spiritual nature, "I am the Word of God spoken forth in perfection."

"This Word is a generative center with all the possibilities of God...It is the idea of God, the image and likeness...So the 'seed,' that is, 'the word of God,' is man; not the external thinking personality that has a consciousness of separation, but the internal spiritual germ" (Atom-Smashing Power of Mind, p. 135).

33. People are curious to know how the manifest universe was created. From ignorant man who merely wonders to the man of science who seeks to inquire into the mysteries of creation, there is a reaching out after knowledge concerning the creative process. There is both an "involutionary" and an "evolutionary" creation. The first chapter of Genesis relates the creation by involution. It shows how the divine qualities (ideas) are spoken forth by God's Word "let there be." Then on the sixth day of creation God's Idea, in which is wrapped all the God nature, comes forth as spiritual man or God's Word. In this man, the image-likeness of God, the Son, the Christ, "the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily" (Col. 2:9), therefore he has all the essence or nature of all that is God. The seventh day, or Sabbath, is the period of inner working, when there is a "resting," a "hallowing" and a "blessing." The next step will be the evolutionary phase of creation when manifest man makes his advent upon the visible plane.

34. God "spoke" His word which came forth as

spiritual man when He said, "Let us make man in our image [the active and passive phases of God's nature], after our likeness." The mission of this "man" is to evolve or unfold in the manifest world all of the nature or image of God before creation can be said to be complete. This means that man is not only involved with his fellow man and with God, but with the very universe itself. Thus is the "evolutionary" side of creation fulfilled. We might liken the "involutionary" and "evolutionary" aspects of creation to the process through which the oak tree passes. There is in the acorn all the nature and characteristics of the oak tree which must unfold or evolve before we see another oak tree.

35. Every individual "makes" his own world, and he does this through his word, the activity of ideas in his consciousness. Only to the extent that he *knows* the qualities (ideas or attributes) of Being, such as life, love, wisdom, power, faith, order, and so forth, does he use them righteously to "make" his body and his world. Man in his unfolding human consciousness only partly realizes the wisdom, substance, life, and power of God, and therefore does not actually create; he merely "forms," and his work is not always enduring because it is not always based on Truth.

"Man does not "create" anything, if by this term is meant the producing of something from nothing; but he does make the formless up into form" (Atom-Smashing Power of Mind).

36. It is Unity's view that divinity is not separate from, nor the exclusive prerogative of, God or Jesus Christ, but is *involved* in man and is progres-

sively revealed to him as he fulfills his divine destiny. Jesus Christ, who we believe is the greatest exponent of this teaching, did not make as the keynote of His message "Look what I can do as a Son of God," but rather, "Here is what you can do as a Son of God." In this way Jesus fulfilled His role as Way-Shower.

COMMENTARY ON "THE DIVINITY OF MAN"

From the historical standpoint the terms *Christ*, *Jesus*, and *Jesus Christ* are names or titles applied to the Man of Nazareth, the great Healer, Teacher, Overcomer, and resurrected Lord, who according to Christian belief is the Savior of mankind. "You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

As brought out in the lesson material, from the metaphysical standpoint *Christ* is the image of God, the Word, the Son, the Law, the pattern of perfection in each person. Christ is the I AM identity; the perfect Self of every person; the divine pattern in every man's threefold nature (spirit, soul, body).

Christ Consciousness

Every man has the capacity to attain what in Unity we call "Christ consciousness." Christ consciousness is a deep awareness of the divinity which is the Truth of every man's being.

The Christ consciousness is man's knowing within his own being that he is a son of God; that "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). Man establishes this consciousness by recognizing God as the one Presence and Power of creation. Jesus knew Himself as the Son of God, with all that this

tremendous conception implies. By recognizing God, and only God, His sonship became the dominant factor of His life.

When man understands and uses the Christ ideas in his thinking, feeling, acting, and reacting, he is beginning to establish the Christ consciousness in his own life. When under the many forms and varied manifestations of the world he recognizes the one life vibrant in every atom, recognizes the hidden love enfolding all in oneness, he comes into conscious touch with this hidden life and love. When man feels himself to be one with all life, he has then touched the Christ consciousness. No longer does he seek to fight "forms" with which he does not feel in harmony. Instead, he seeks contact with the divine idea behind the form.

The Christ consciousness contains certain spiritual attributes which, when expressed by man, are the key to abundant living. The Christ consciousness expresses itself in the mind of man, giving him a depth of wisdom beyond human understanding.

This flow of the Christ consciousness through the heart of man endows him with a quality of divine love. When the Christ consciousness finds expression through man, he is calm and serene, expressing the "peace that passes understanding." When man has attuned himself to the Christ consciousness, his affairs express the beauty, harmony, and substance of Spirit. When a person's body is aligned with the Christ consciousness it is radiant with the wholeness and life of God.

Jesus as Savior

Jesus is the Elder Brother of man because He

came into the full realization of Himself as a spiritual being, a Son of God. He lived in the consciousness of His sonship. He proved it by the example of His own life, and He also fulfilled His mission for all mankind, which was to be the Way-Shower.

Jesus is considered Savior of mankind because He showed man by example how to recognize God as the Father of all. Jesus proved that God's will for man is all-good in mind, body, and affairs. Jesus taught man how to bring forth this good through the process of scientific thinking, and how consciously to identify himself with the Father within.

Because of His consciousness of divinity, Jesus can lead the way to man's "finding the Christ," just as an elder brother will help his younger brothers and sisters to accomplish whatever they wish to do. As a human being Jesus was born of Mary; as a divine being He was born of God (the

Holy Spirit).

Jesus Christ is Savior of mankind in a general way because He brought the "saving grace" of God to the attention of men. As Elder Brother, He was the first to prove fully the laws of God. He proved these laws in His own life through His miracles of healing and other demonstrations. He also helped others prove these laws in their own lives.

Jesus was pointing to the individual savior in ourselves, our own Father indwelling, or as He put it, "Your Father who sees in secret." It is this God-Presence within us that "saves" us from mistakes that come through ignorance of ourself as a spiritual being.

Jesus' mission was to present the truth about man and his relationship to God. When we follow

Jesus' teachings (or "my words" as Jesus called them) we are made safe from danger, sickness, sorrow, or any limitation of mind, body, or affairs. In this sense, then, Jesus Christ is the Savior of mankind, in that He showed man "how" to find and express his innate divinity.

APPENDIX

UNITY VIEWPOINT ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

It is the policy of Unity, as one of the metaphysical movements, to deal with traditional Christian doctrine from an intuitive and metaphysical standpoint. The design of this approach is to offer an intimate means of applying these doctrines within the sphere of an individual's everyday experience. An application of these doctrines, in this sense, enables the individual to celebrate these doctrines as a continuing exercise in spiritual unfoldment.

The Bible

- 1. The Bible has first place in the study of Truth, because Unity regards it as a primary source of inspiration. All other books and texts that we use in the study of Truth are intended as supplementary material to give us a better understanding of the various Scriptures.
- 2. The Bible is a recital of what has taken place in the consciousness of man, of the results of his working either intelligently with the law of Being, or ignorantly against it in achieving his own salvation. It gives the best explanation of spiritual law as applied to man and tells him how to find the kingdom of God within himself. It is the most valuable reference book in the study of Truth.

3. The Bible contains the moral code that leads to Christhood, the law that leads to mastery, the prophecies that lead to illumination and understanding. In the Old Testament we see God as Lord, as law, as wisdom; in the New Testament, we see God as the Word incarnate, Christ, coming forth as the beloved Son, proving God as love.

"Few men have thought more about the meaning of the Bible than Charles Fillmore. To him, it shed light on every phase of human existence, and one of the great tasks that he set for himself was the exposition of the Bible's inner light to men. To him, the Bible was valuable not because it is a history of people who lived thousands of years ago, but because when properly understood it sheds light on our own problems. To him, the Bible was valuable because of its practicality; he thought of it as a guidebook to daily living" (The Story of Unity, p. 187).

"The Bible veils in its history the march of man from innocence and ignorance to a measure of sophistication and understanding. Over all hovers the divine idea of man, the perfect man pattern, the Lord, who is a perpetual source of inspiration and power for every man. Those who seek to know this Lord and His manifestation, Jesus Christ, receive a certain spiritual quickening that opens the inner eye of the soul and they see beyond the land of shadows into the world of Spirit" (Mysteries of Genesis, Foreword, second and third pages).

4. The Bible is the history of man. Its sixty-six

books describe in allegory, prophecy, epistle, parable, and poem, man's generation, degeneration, and regeneration. It has been preserved and prized beyond all other books because it teaches man how to develop the highest principle of his being, the spirit. As man is a threefold being, spirit, soul, and body, so the Bible is a trinity in unity. It is body as a book of history; soul as a teacher of morals; and spirit as a teacher of the mysteries of being.

5. The student of history finds the Bible interesting if not wholly accurate; the faithful good man finds in it that which strengthens his righteousness, and the overcomer with Christ finds it to be the greatest of all books as a guide to his spiritual unfoldment.

Fall of Man

6. The expression "fall of man" originated with the allegory in the second chapter of Genesis. As we unfold and develop, we are in the process of growing up consciously into mature sons of God. The "fall of man" is not just something that took place in the far distant past. A "fall" takes place in our human consciousness (soul) every time we lower our thinking and feeling from the divine standard of Truth, and depart from the guidance of Spirit. This "fallen" or error state of consciousness can never be permanent, for we are essentially spiritual beings. When we come to know this truth consciously, we may choose at any time to rise above error beliefs in our human consciousness by making the right use of our formative power of thought. That is, all our thinking is to be done from the standpoint of Truth. "Be transformed by

the renewal of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). The socalled "fall" is not experienced by our divine nature but only by our evolving human consciousness.

"There may be found in the traditions of nearly all peoples, references to a time when man was in a state of consciousness very much superior to that which he now manifests. In the Hebrew Scriptures that superior plan is symbolically described as the Edenic state, and the departure from that place in the divine economy is called theologically the 'fall of man'... Man cannot thwart the divine plan, but by virtue of his own creative or formative power he can turn his part of the work in that plan out of its true course and impede the consummation of it.... So we have to admit that the 'fall of man' is in a measure true. When we understand this 'fall' we shall perceive more fully why certain conditions that prevail are so incongruous in a world where a good and perfect God is supposed to rule" (Talks on Truth, pp. 161, 162).

Sin

- 7. Mankind in general looks upon sin as a transgression of the moral law only; that is, nonconformance to the law as set forth in the Ten Commandments. These laws have to do with the *conduct* of man.
- 8. Sin is not the mere doing of wrong acts that do not conform to the moral law or the committing of offenses against others. Sin originates in the

human consciousness or soul, the realm of thinking and feeling. Sin is a failure to recognize and apply spiritual principles despite the fact that we have an inner knowledge that may be drawn on at will. Sin is primarily man's *belief* that he is separate from God; that he is limited and unlike his divine Parent. Sin is ignoring the divine law of life; it is a failure to recognize one's own innate divinity and failure to apply (demonstrate) spiritual principles (divine ideas) in his own life and affairs.

- 9. Sin is a failure to acknowledge the Christ, I AM, within ourselves and others. We sin daily in our lack of trust in the Father; in our failure to live as becomes children of God; in our dependence on people and on so-called material things for our sustenance and happiness. Many who truly desire to live a righteous life sin because of ignorance. But when we pray to be delivered from such ignorance and to be illumined by Spirit within, we come to realize what sin really means, and then we seek to know and demonstrate the true Christ righteousness.
- 10. The "unpardonable sin" is resistance to the Spirit, consciousness of good and evil. This has reference to man's opposition to the action of the Holy Spirit, the movement of God in and through his consciousness; resistance to any good. As long as man is not willing to accept the leading of Spirit, as long as he refuses to accept the truth that he is a son of God, a spiritual being, the image-likeness of God, he must suffer and atone for his transgressions.
- 11. As long as man recognizes and gives power to evil, he will continue in any unforgiven state in his own consciousness and will have to meet condi-

tions produced by the error that he has held in his own mind. Resistance can keep man from being free; thus the fault for his bondage lies within himself. No sin need remain unpardoned because the love of God for man. His beloved son to whom He has given His own Spirit, is always available. God is always ready and willing to forgive man his mistakes. However, when man is not ready or willing to accept forgiveness from God, then his sin (shortcoming) remains unpardoned-actually only by himself, because God as love has already forgiven the sin and the sinner! We have the assurance of Jesus Christ: "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you" (Matt. 6:14). We have also David's praise for Jehovah's mercies in the words:

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the Pit" (Psalms 103:2-4).

The Devil

12. Unity does not believe that the devil has personal form. The Greek and the Latin origins from which the word devil came into our language meant "the slanderer," the original or root significance of which is "to throw or let fall across," indicating delusion, a veiling. We find that "the devil" is a state of consciousness built by man when he has forgotten that he is a child of the living God. This state of mind is built because a person is ignorant of the true use of divine laws

(ideas), and when he reaps the unhappy result of misapplied law he thinks there is something outside of himself causing him unhappiness. The state of consciousness that is "the devil" functions contrary to divine good; thus it has accepted belief in separation, belief in the power of the outer world to harm.

- 13. The forces personified as "the devil" are not real or reality, for they are man's own formations of wrong beliefs. God gave to each of us freedom of will, so that we may use our God-powers as we choose. When we are guilty of unrighteous use of the will faculty, we bring into our life by the mental law of cause and effect results that cause pain and distress. This we call sinning.
- 14. In both the Old Testament and the New Testament we find the Hebrew word Abaddon, the Greek form for which is Apollyon. Both of these words mean "destroyer." In II Corinthians 6:15 we find "the devil" called Belial, meaning worthlessness, lawlessness. In Matthew, "the devil" is designated as Beelzebub. We find the word Satan, another word used for "the devil," occurring in both the Old and the New Testaments, meaning "adversary."
- 15. In the American Standard Version of the New Testament, "the devil" is referred to as "the Adversary." This "Adversary" is an adverse state of consciousness which has developed in man. Because of man's belief in two powers, there is warfare in the individual soul.
- 16. Since, as we have learned, God is the one Presence and the one Power in the universe, the seeming power of "the Adversary" must come from man, to whom God has given all authority,

dominion, and freedom of will, for he is to represent God in the manifest world. By using this freedom and power for his own selfish interests instead of recognizing the unity of all creation, man has built within himself a state of consciousness adverse to the universal good. The strength of the adverse thought lies in the power attributed to it by the people who have accepted it. Thus it seems to be a separate force, no longer under the control of man. It is an enemy, subtle, lying, deceiving; it is "a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).

"The 'devil' is a state of consciousness adverse to the divine good.... There is no personal devil. God is the one omnipresent Principle of the universe, and there is no room for any principle of evil, personified or otherwise (The Revealing Word, p. 54).

17. So "the devil" in our life is the will faculty being used in the wrong direction, resulting in adverse states of consciousness that in turn produce inharmonies in our manifest life. Jesus' command was to "resist not evil" (Matt. 5:39 A.V.), but we also read in James 4:7, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." If we attempt to fight conditions that are not good, we only succeed in binding them closer to us. On the other hand, if we do not do positive mental work to handle the adverse states of consciousness ("the devil") we will find ourself letting them rule our life. Only as we show forth (manifest) our Son-of-God self, the Christ, are we able to remove the error conditions that have been set up by our own adverse states of consciousness ("the devil").

Hell

- 18. "Hell" as understood metaphysically represents a state of consciousness, a state of mind. The word hell is derived from the Saxon verb helan, which means "to cover or conceal," and contains no suggestion of a place of torment. The word hell was translated also from Gehenna, "the Valley of Hinnom," a ravine where fires were kept going all the time to burn the refuse of Jerusalem. We have the word Sheol from the original Hebrew, meaning a grave or pit. Later it came to mean a place of quietness in which the souls of the dead rest, awaiting resurrection, and not a place of torment or punishment. Sheol was translated into Greek in the Septuagint as Hades, which had the Greek classical meaning of "kingdom of the dead."
- 19. All of these terms have given rise to the popular misconception that the dead writhe in flames, tormented for their sins, unforgiven and forgotten by the God of love and of Absolute Good!
- 20. The writers of the Bible, and Jesus also, did believe that the wicked experienced torment, but they knew that its purpose is not to punish eternally but to purify and refine. They chose as an illustration the place of *Gehenna* to describe it. As suggested above this word does not refer to a hell, as it has been translated, but to the valley of *Hinnom*. Ge Hinnom
- 21. "Hell-fire" is not for the destruction and torment of men but for the burning up of dross.

"For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any one builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble—each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.... If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire" (I Cor. 3:11-15).

"God is a devouring fire" (Deut. 4:24), consuming not men but their sins and errors.

22. "Fire" or the "hell of fire" spoken of in the Scriptures is a misinterpretation of words that mean purification or cleansing, and have no reference to punishment. The "hell of fire," then, symbolizes soul cleansing or purification of the accumulation of limited concepts, wrong thoughts, false beliefs, error feelings and actions. As the soul grows in understanding there comes a period when it is necessary that the soul free or cleanse itself of the dross that it has gathered in its progress toward consciousness, expression, and manifestation of the pure and perfect Christ life. In the old symbology this cleansing was represented by "fire." The Holy Spirit moving through the soul can dissolve or consume what error beliefs may be fixed there.

Repentance

23. "Repentance is more than grief for the past and resolution for the future. It involves a change of the whole person. It is creative, a positive, affirmative act, rather than a mere negative turning away from sin" (Hastings Dictionary of the Bible, p. 842).

In making this change, we have not only to behold

ourself as perfect in mind and body, but we must eliminate from our mind all consciousness of sin and evil, all belief that they have reality. We must learn to see the perfection of God as being brought forth in all creation, to know that there is no sin in the divine plan for man, no evil in reality, though it may exist as an appearance. We must all come to see that each person is expressing God according to his individual concept, his highest knowing in spite of appearances. Today each one knows in part; tomorrow his knowing will be greater, and he will express in a way that is becoming a little nearer to the perfection which God is.

24. To repent means to turn away from seeing a relative good and a relative evil and to behold the Absolute Good even as God saw it at creation. As we come into a knowledge of the purpose of life, we discern that we live in a spiritual universe; that our environment is really God, Divine Mind. We also discover God's presence and power within us as the true source and cause of our every good. Thus we attain a new attitude toward life, a new purpose in living, and endeavor to manifest more of the divine Spirit that is within us. Paul said, "I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting; . . . For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret" (II Cor. 7:9, 10).

Judgment Day

25. The "day of judgment" is not a specific date, because every day is a judgment day; each thought, feeling, and action brings its own judgment. We can think of the day of judgment as

a time of fruition, the instant when the effect of some cause or causes in consciousness has reached its maturity—or in other words, the instant when past thinking has produced its result in mind, body, or affairs, whether good or bad.

26. The "great day of judgment"—which has been located at some fateful time in the future when we all shall be called before the judge of the world and have punishment meted out to us for our sins—is every day.

27. The "judgment seat" is the term used to indicate the "place" in man that is occupied by the law of man's being, the spiritual law of life called the I AM or the Christ. Man's thoughts, feelings, words, and acts are continually being set before this Presence in man to determine if they are in harmony with Truth and if they can bring forth fruits in accordance with God's law of Absolute Good. Our Scripture puts it this way: "You will know them by their fruits" (Matt. 7:20).

28. Thus, the "judgment day" is a time of fruition, the time when the effect or the result of some cause or causes has reached maturity and produced a condition or circumstance in mind, body, or affairs, whether good or bad. As we unfold spiritually, we come to recognize and understand the "day of judgment." We realize that there is a law of Being at work in us that cannot be violated.

Forgiveness

29. To forgive is to "give" something "for"; to exchange the mental concept of limitation of oneself, of others, of life in general for the Truth. It is to give one's thoughts to building new states

of consciousness based on divine ideas. Primarily, forgiveness of sin is the forsaking of all thoughts and concepts that do not measure up to the divine standard of universal good. Forgiveness causes us to behold good in all things and to pour out a feeling of love toward everybody and all living creatures.

- 30. Forgiveness is a way of release, a mental letting go of every thought and feeling of fear, anxiety, worry, selfishness, greed, hurt, injustice, or disappointment. Forgiveness means giving the blessings of love for feelings of wounded pride, egotism, or injury. It includes forgiving oneself as well as others. We cannot pour out a blessing of forgiveness without feeling an inrush of power and peace.
- 31. "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). This principle of righteousness is at the foundation of all right relations between men. Forgiveness and mercy are included in the idea of divine justice. If we desire forgiveness and justice, we must first grant them to others. We cannot expect a just God to forgive us our sins while we are missing the mark of the right use of our judgment faculty by condemning others. There must be balance. Because an individual is conscious of some offense, he must learn to forgive, but we find that "forgiveness" is first of all what takes place in the person's own consciousness. By forgiveness an individual sets himself in right relationship to God, and then he is set right with his fellowman. When Jesus referred to our need for forgiveness before the Father could forgive us, He was being very rational. Whatever we hold in our own mind is a part of our conscious-

ness, there is no room for the Truth to come into our mind.

- 32. No forgiveness can be complete without love. A person cannot expect forgiveness if he fails to forgive himself and others who have fallen short. Each of us needs to "give" the Truth "for" the error or shortcoming (debt). Every person has at one time or another incurred "debts" to God, to himself, to mankind. These he can erase by forgiveness. In order to forgive, one must give up the belief that originally caused the "debt" or shortcoming of himself or another, then he must give in to the idea of love.
- 33. When we forgive another person, we erase from consciousness the sense of wrong that we have held over him, and likewise we forgive ourself, for as we forgive, we are ourself forgiven. Sometimes it takes a great deal of discernment (judgment) to learn how to forgive, for what we need to forgive is often hidden from us, nursed in the secret recesses of the subconscious (feeling) nature.
- 34. As we forgive and are forgiven, we are conscious of being established in the principle of Absolute Good. The justice of the forgiving love of Jesus Christ sets us free from all indebtedness, whether spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, moral, or financial. The way is thus opened for the outer fulfillment of the Scriptural injunction,

"Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law" (Rom. 13:8 A.V.).

Atonement

35. "In more general theological usage the

'Atonement' is the work of Christ both in removing sin and in bringing together or reconciling God and man" (Dictionary of the Bible).

36. The original root meaning of the verb atone was "to make at one," by reconciling differences between those who had been at variance. Metaphysically, the "atonement" is the blending and harmonious functioning of man's thinking and feeling with the Christ mind.

37. Men in an unenlightened state of knowing have felt themselves separated from goodness by looking upon God as "a holy Being" separate from them; feeling their iniquity in not being able to measure up to His standard of holiness. However, Jesus of Nazareth taught and demonstrated at-one-ment. "I and the Father are one," He said. (John 10:30.)

38. Jesus, the Man, taught the relationship of God and man as Father and son. He showed men their likeness to God, emphasizing their inherent God nature. He encouraged them to claim and prove this oneness (at-one-ment) as He had done.

39. Jesus did not *make* the atonement for us—He showed us how to reestablish the ideal in which we were created. Real atonement comes through sustained alliance between man and his indwelling Christ nature (Lord).

Overcoming

40. The term *overcoming* has a special significance for students in Unity. Overcoming is a "coming over" into the Christ consciousness, or a starting on the return journey to the Father's

house: spiritual consciousness. It is in reality the growing consciousness of one's power to master any condition or situation, mentally, morally, physically, or environmentally through one's faculties, supervised by the Christ.

- 41. What we are to overcome primarily is our wrong beliefs—our belief in separation from God, from our good; belief that other persons or conditions can keep our good from us; belief that sickness, poverty, war, inharmony, failure are inevitable. These error beliefs are the mental causes which have produced like conditions in our human experience. We long for release from such conditions but feel bound by them, until we know their cause and begin the work of overcoming through the indwelling Christ power.
- 42. The difference between one who merely does the best he can and a real overcomer is in consciousness. One uses his own mental effort in the trial-and-error method. The other turns consciously to the Christ within himself and uses the creative power of God to improve his consciousness and eventually his life and affairs. The overcomer lavs hold of a divine power through faith which enables him to do what he of himself could not do. This is the power of the indwelling Christ. "I can of myself do nothing" (John 5:30 A.S.V.). "I can do all things in him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). One's success as an overcomer depends upon the understanding that he has of the Christ principle within. Prayer enables him to get this understanding.

"An overcomer is one who recognizes the Truth of his being and is renewing his mind and body and affairs by changing his thoughts from the old mortal beliefs to the new as he sees them in Divine Mind. He is one who demonstrates the divine law, not only in surface life but in innermost consciousness. Spiritual power, mastery, and dominion are attained by the overcomer" (Keep a True Lent, p. 180).

Salvation

43. All our Truth study has impressed us with the understanding that it is the Christ within, sometimes termed the I AM, that can save and deliver us from difficulty; that this inner God Presence is the real source of the protection that we seek. Therefore, we can say, "God is my salvation" (Isa. 12:2). If our spiritual nature, our Godself, the Christ, is our salvation, then salvation is a gift of God.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8).

44. A gift can neither be worked out nor earned, so what do we mean by "working out our salvation"? This has reference to all the work that has to be done in our soul (thinking and feeling) so that we are able to accept the gift so freely offered to us and then to express it understandingly. Part of this work will be denial of error beliefs, especially of the belief that we are separated from God. Another important part of "working out our salvation" will be that of speaking affirmations. It is only after we have done the work of cleansing our consciousness of beliefs that are not based on Truth that we are ready to lay hold of divine ideas.

Our soul has to be trained to accept the truth that salvation is our right now because our true salvation is our indwelling Christ nature.

- 45. We are really "saved," first, as the soul accepts the truth of our own divinity; second, when we have recognized that we have within us "this mind... which you have in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5); third, when we have seen the body as the divine instrument for soul and spirit to express through. With this knowledge, we are saved from making the mistakes that would follow if we were ignorant of the truth about God, about ourselves, about creation. To try to save ourselves through sheer willpower alone is not the way for "salvation belongeth unto Jehovah" (Psalms 3:8 A.S.V.).
- 46. Acceptance of salvation takes place the moment we become *conscious* that we have God's Presence within us as our own true nature. This indwelling Presence is the only means by which we can be "saved" from the beliefs and conditions that are less than the perfection that God has willed for us. So in working out life's problems we see that our salvation lies in knowing the God principle within ourselves, knowing that it is constantly available.

"Salvation through Jesus Christ is not accomplished by looking forward to freedom but by realizing that we are now free through His freeing power, which we are using to cut the bonds with which our thoughts have bound us" (Jesus Christ Heals, p. 165).

Grace

47. Grace is the unmerited favor of God to

man. The grace of God is His love in action for man. The love of God is equally available to all His creation, but we receive His grace "according to the measure of Christ's gift" (Eph. 4:7). God gives Himself equally to all, but our response to His love determines how each of us lets this love produce miraculous results in his life. In other words, to the extent that we recognize, acknowledge, and accept God's love for us, we experience God's grace. It is a free gift to each of us and only awaits our acceptance.

"To become recipients of that which the Father would bestow, we should take the element of grace into consideration; that even beyond what we ask, seek, earn, or deserve under the law, God is more than willing to give. God, as the great creative principle of the universe, will always meet us more than half way. By becoming receptive to the 'grace of God,' we receive the measure of God's provision, which exceeds any of our imaginings" (Keep a True Lent, p. 169).

48. We may think of grace as being God's love actively working for us at our definite request—fulfilling all the laws of God, for "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10), says Paul. God always loves us, but His love is ours as grace when we avail ourselves of it in any situation. This grace meets us right where we are, no matter what our level of soul unfoldment. The love of God is as much available to the one sunk deeply in sin as to the saint, but each must, as a free-will being, call on it—then is God's love active as His grace. None of us need hold back and say, "I am not worthy," because the fact that we desire to know God con-

sciously, and long for His forgiveness, erases the mistakes of the past and makes us worthy to receive.

- 49. Paul spoke extensively of grace. Jesus Christ spoke of love. Grace is favor, kindness, mercy, love. The love of God implies the forgiveness of God in all situations, circumstances, conditions. It is the power within man that saves him from the effects of his past false thinking, feeling, and acting when he turns from the limited to the unlimited wisdom and love of God.
- 50. God's grace reveals the beauty of life; it makes us appreciative of good in any form. We speak of a person or thing as being "graceful" and are at once aware of beauty, divine order, symmetry, and the response in us is one of satisfaction.
- 51. While we say that grace is the unmerited favor of God to man, there is a sense in which we need to "merit" the right to accept this "free gift" by aligning our consciousness and our conduct with God's laws of good.

Virgin Birth

52. Traditionally the doctrine of the Virgin Birth has been the subject of prolonged controversy, with many conflicting interpretations. Unity recognizes a historical possibility and a metaphysical significance to the event. Each student is left free to determine for himself what he believes concerning this matter. "The story of the Virgin Birth is clearly presented in two of the Synoptic Gospels. (See Matt. 1:1-25 and Luke 1:26-56). Mark does not record the birth of Jesus, but starts his story with the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Both

Matthew and Luke set forth the facts in clear, unmistakable terms. Hence, the story of the Virgin Birth must have been current among, and accepted by, the early Christians—since both these Gospels were in circulation around A.D. 70" (New Testament Bible Lessons, Dr. Herbert J. Hunt).

- 53. Recent scholarship suggests that "The doctrine of the Virgin Birth is not a proved miracle, it is understandable only by faith" (Dictionary of the Bible, p. 629).
- 54. Unity finds in the "virgin birth" of Jesus a deep metaphysical significance. Tradition tells us that Mary was not only virgin by reason of her unmarried state, but she was also virgin in mind and heart. We believe that this has a symbolic meaning. Just as Jesus was born to one whose mind and heart were pure and uncorrupted, so too is the Spirit of Christ born into individual consciousness as the mind and heart are made pure and clean, freed of all mortal thought and sin.
- 55. No one should feel that the manner of Jesus' birth made Him so different from the rest of mankind that we all cannot be perfect as He was perfect. It was Jesus' divine origin that gave Him power, not the peculiar circumstances surrounding His physical birth. Each individual, though he may be unaware of it, is a divine child of God, heir to all of God's goodness. Each bears the same relationship to God as Jesus: all are equally sons and children of the Most High. To take advantage of our divine sonship, we need to know the truth about what we are with such conviction that we can henceforth live as Jesus lived, immaculately, divinely, with no taint of mortality. The life of Jesus will ever be our example of how we should

think and speak and act. Following Him will truly be found the way to salvation.

Baptism

- 56. The account of Jesus' baptism of His disciples is found in the 20th chapter of the Gospel of John, verses 19 to 22. "On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them, and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'"
- 57. Unity interprets the traditional sacrament of baptism symbolically, using a spiritual form of baptism rather than water. John the Baptist said, "I baptize you with water; but he [Jesus Christ] who is mightier than I is coming . . . he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Luke 3:16).
- 58. The "second baptism" is the baptism of Spirit. While the symbol of water baptism has been effective in indicating man's willingness to cleanse his human consciousness in order to enter into the Christ consciousness, it is the second baptism which is of greater significance to the Truth student. This "second baptism" is the total immersion of the individual in the Christ Spirit.
- 59. There are two sides to baptism—man's act and God's action. Man's act includes the process of denial and affirmation—God's action is called the

baptism of the Holy Spirit and is the movement of His Spirit in man.

60. Oftentimes persons confuse a transient emotional experience with the receiving of the Holy Spirit. In contrast, the receiving of the Holy Spirit should in fact be a deeply spiritual experience which occurs at the core of one's being. It is a quiet, intimate acceptance into one's consciousness of the magnificent qualities of spirit. These qualities would include—love, life, wholeness, power, wisdom, courage, and joy. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not limited to the performance of rites or ceremonies. It can be experienced whenever the individual enters into a significant, affirmative prayer experience.

"Holy Spirit Baptism—A quickening of the spiritual nature that is reflected in mind and body. Spiritual baptism has power; it is affirmative; it is positive. This outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the second baptism" (*The Revealing Word*, pp. 21-22).

The Lord's Supper

61. Holy Communion (or the Lord's Supper) is symbolic of a spiritual process that we go through when we lay hold of God substance and life. Bread (the body of Christ) represents the substance of Spirit. Wine (the blood of Christ) represents the life of Spirit. By making the life of Christ our own, our life takes on significant new dimensions. Jesus Christ came to bring to the race the knowledge of the abundant, omnipresent life. "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). Paul said that people were weak, sickly,

and asleep or dead because they did not realize the presence of the ever living Christ within them. They were looking toward the outer symbols of substance and life instead of the spirit and truth they represent (I Cor. 12:29, 30).

62. Jesus said, "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). The Lord's Supper is a form of spiritual worship and must be spiritually understood. We discern the Lord's body by recognizing that it is substance and that it is within us. We "eat" the body of Christ (substance); and drink His blood (life) by affirming the omnipresence of substance and life, and claiming union with them. This is the true sacrament, and our body is vitalized and renewed when this whole sacrament is partaken of.

The Cross

63. "The cross" has been a central symbol in Christian thought since the crucifixion of Jesus. Many different interpretations have been given to the cross throughout Christian history. Unity interprets the experience of "the cross" as the final releasing and "crossing out" of all mundane and limited beliefs.

"The cross is not a burden, as commonly understood, but is a symbol of the forces in man adjusted in their right relation" (The Twelve Powers of Man, p. 156).

64. When Jesus said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24), He was speaking from His Christ or I AM Self. He meant that if anyone desires to come into the understanding,

freedom, and abundance of life which the Christ consciousness affords, he must drop from consciousness ("deny himself") all error beliefs and accept the truth of himself as the beloved son of God with a divine inheritance.

65. To "follow me" is to live the laws of God in every phase of our experience. We seek to know God as the source of life, so that health, vitality, strength, wholeness may manifest in our body. As we recognize God as the source of abundance, we are able to manifest prosperity in our affairs according to our special needs. Jesus saw God, the Father of us all, as the source to which every man must turn for fulfillment in his life, no matter what the appearances.

Resurrection

- 66. The resurrection of Jesus was experienced as a fact by the early Christian community. Because of its intense drama this event has become the focal point of the Christian consciousness. Without the resurrection experience it is unlikely that the Christian community would have evolved. The resurrection of Jesus symbolizes his eternal presence with us as the *Christ*. Despite the historical importance of the resurrection, there is a contemporary significance to this idea that each person may apply in his own life.
- 67. Resurrection may be seen as the lifting up of man as a threefold being—spirit, soul, body—restoring him to his rightful place in God's kingdom. It is lifting man to the consciousness of the omnipresence of God.
 - 68. Resurrection is raising the consciousness of

life from the human concept to the God idea; from the limited expression of life to the unlimited expression of eternal life. It is the soul coming up out of a belief in death to faith in life.

69. Resurrection is, therefore, a constant, conscious understanding and realization of oneself as a son of God, created in the image and after the likeness of God, thus always one with God. Jesus expressed this oneness when He said, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30).

The Church of Christ

70. Of the Greek words for "church," ecclesia gives the clearest understanding. It means "calledout ones," and this is what the "body of Christ," His church, consists of. The people of His church are called out of darkness into light; out of bondage into liberty; out of death into life.

71. Individually, the "church of Christ" is a temple of God within each human being, an aggregation of spiritual ideas within the individual consciousness, the point of contact between the human and the divine. It is here that the Christ holds its never-ending services.

72. The universal "church of Christ" consists of those individuals, regardless of race, color, occupation, or place on the earth, who have awakened to the divine nature and purpose of Spirit in mankind. It is they who are carrying out the plan universally. Such are members of the body of Christ. They are the universal "church of Christ."

"The true Christ church is not an outer sect, or religious denomination....To establish the church, or ecclesia, of God in man, a new

state of consciousness must be formed. Man must gain an understanding of God as Spirit, and also must understand his own relation to Spirit.... The church of God begins its activity in man as a mental perception, which must go through certain processes before it is established in the whole consciousness. Its work is subjective first; that is, it is a silent interior planting of spiritual ideas, which do not make themselves manifest at once, but work like leaven, and in time transform the individual" (Metaphysical Bible Dictionary, p. 151).

73. The New Testament teaching about the body of Christ has seemed mystical, but the Scriptures promise that the Spirit of Truth will guide men into all Truth, therefore nothing is beyond the comprehension of the mind of one whose understanding is quickened by Spirit.

74. In the 12th chapter of I Corinthians Paul describes the church of Christ or the Lord's body and explains its working in this way: "Just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body... the body does not consist of one member but of many."

"The true church is not made of creeds and forms, nor is it contained in walls of wood and stone; the heart of man is its temple and the Spirit of Truth is the one guide into all Truth. When men learn to turn within to the Spirit of Truth, who is in each one for his light and inspiration, the differences between the churches of man will be eliminated, and

the one church will be recognized" (Metaphysical Bible Dictionary, p. 151).

- 75. In the church of Christ or Lord's body, each individual has a particular talent, described by Paul as a gift. "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (I Cor. 12:7). "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit" (I Cor. 12:4). These gifts Spirit divides "to each one individually as he wills" (I Cor. 12:11). One's gift and place as a member of the body cannot be bestowed or filled by any other man. Each one receives directly from God the place he is to fill and the work he is to do.
- 76. Of all the gifts, that of healing seems to be more fully desired, developed, and manifested than any of the others. There is a greater realization of its need and greater understanding of how to use it.

Reincarnation

- 77. Reincarnation is understood to be the reembodiment of man in physical form; the rebirth of an individual soul in a new human body. While Unity does not stress reincarnation as a fundamental of its teaching, an open-mindedness on this issue is maintained.
- 78. Speculation on what may happen to the individual consciousness after the transition called death is a matter for individual illumination. Unity has seen in reincarnation a plausible explanation of the Ongoing progress of the individual soul. It sees reincarnation as the mercy of God, made possible by the love of God, as man seeks to fulfill his divine destiny of demonstrating perfection. God's plan is all-inclusive of good, and part of this plan is

giving man unlimited opportunities to become conscious of who and what he is.

- 79. Reincarnation is essentially the formation and responsibility of the soul of man. It is a merciful provision for man that gives him other opportunities to express life in the physical body in order that he may learn the lessons of right thinking, right feeling, right speaking, right acting on this plane. In order to manifest in the physical realm, the soul must have a physical body, as a vehicle of expression, through which to prove its birthright. "He is not God of the dead, but of the living" (Luke 20:38). Therefore, reincarnation is also a merciful provision for the soul, giving it unlimited opportunities to demonstrate eternal life.
- 80. After what has already been suggested we can see that the goal of man should not be reincarnation, but resurrection: a rising again; the resumption of vigor; the raising of the whole man, spirit, soul, body, into the Christ consciousness of righteousness and life . . . now!

Second Coming

- 81. In church tradition, the followers of Jesus have awaited a "second coming" of the Lord, believing that a new kingdom may be established on earth. Many predictions were made as to when Jesus might come again to accomplish this. There are continuing predictions about when this might occur.
- 82. In Unity we feel that the second coming is a highly personal matter. It occurs when a sense of the omnipresent Spirit of the Christ dawns in the individual consciousness. In this respect, the

"second coming" has already occurred for many people. It is a personal acceptance of the ever-living Christ as a dominant factor of consciousness and conduct.

83. The personal experience of the "second coming" is one born of prayer. When, in meditation and prayer, one feels Christ occurring in his consciousness as new feelings and awarenesses of love, peace, courage, life, joy, and the like, the second coming has occurred for that person. The effect upon his life is pronounced. He is uplifted, inspired, revitalized, and made a new creature in Christ.

"The second coming of Christ is not a point in time but a point in the growth of an individual's consciousness. It is a personal matter, not a group matter.

"Christ will come out of the depth of your own being when you recognize the presence of your own divinity. And Christ will come into your world through your expression of your divinity" (Practical Christianity for You, p. 45).

COMMENTARY

In this appendix we have dealt with Unity's interpretations of certain traditional beliefs common to all Christians. We realize, as we have suggested already, that others may differ from us in their interpretations. We maintain, however, that the validity or sacredness of anything, be it tradition or ritual, depends upon the spirit in which it is approached and upon the emotions which our speculations concerning it awaken in us. For this reason if for no other we feel justified in presenting these doctrinals in a subjective but reverent manner.

You have learned that Unity believes in a universe which vibrates and pulses with the life and meaning of God, the Good; many of the ideas that we have described and discussed in the last lesson seem either to symbolize or to reveal the depth of this phenomenon. In addition, they serve to inform our faith so that we no longer face the universe ignorant and afraid, but with a genuine sense of awe and respect for the spirit in us which is essentially the same as that which pervades all Creation.

It is worth recalling that in a time of increasing secularization, when voices can be heard crying for an end to many of the great Christian rites, festivals, and tenets of belief, Charles Fillmore and other early Truth teachers sensed this trend. In the

main, they had no intention of starting another Christian denomination, or of reducing Christianity to the level of the secular. The majority of them hoped instead to preserve the appeal and beauty of many traditional beliefs and practices by lending them a contemporary and practical significance, and by placing them in a personal perspective.

Charles Fillmore himself accomplished this task by drawing upon his reserves of Spirit, and by maintaining an attitude of reverential curiosity. He believed that all men should have a positive right to some evidence of the Creator's interest in them and of their own role in the scheme of Creation. For Fillmore, interpretation of doctrinal beliefs ultimately became compassionate, for through his own soul and heart searchings he hoped to set all men free from rote belief and unthinking subjection to arbitrary forces. It is Charles Fillmore's example that we have followed in this lesson, and quotations from his works are freely employed for that reason.

We have not been motivated by any desire to be controversial on topics which are at once intimate and subject to long-range and continued historical, scholarly, and personal development. All we ask in the foregoing lesson is for you to read our points of view, brief as they are in this context, and assess your own responses. If you choose to disagree, this is well, for it is your God-given prerogative to seek spiritual awareness in your own way. You may decide that adherence to traditional sanctions and doctrinal or liturgical forms is more valid to you in gaining intuitive awareness—spiritual quickening. Do not hasten to conclusions, however. Allow the material in this lesson to permeate your conscious-

ness. Allow it to bring about positive responses that may be dormant in your being. Pray, study, and ask for the illumination of your own innate Spirit which will throw into sharp relief the line between truth and error if you allow it to.

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