

FILLMORE WINGS STUDY PROGRAM

THE TRUE CHARACTER OF GOD

UNITY CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL LESSONS

Series 2 Lesson 1



Fillmore Wings Study Program

The True Character of God

Lesson 7

TruthUnity Ministries

<https://www.truthunity.net/wings>

Fillmore Wings Study Program

The True Character of God

Lesson 7

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First Edition, December 7, 2025

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Web version, USC Annotations and original files for this lesson are available at:
www.truthunity.net/wings/lesson-7

WELCOME TO *THE TRUE CHARACTER* *OF GOD*

–Rev. Mark Hicks, General Editor

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THE TRUE CHARACTER OF GOD



INTRODUCTION TO THE NATURE OF GOD

Introduction not yet available.

LESSON FOR THE NATURE OF GOD

Aspects of the Nature of God

? Explain God as Principle.

1. The science taught in these lessons is founded on Spirit. Spiritual science is truly eternal, unlike the everchanging facts of the intellectual sciences, which often are based primarily on appearances. Spiritual science is the one true science and it does not change. All who are seeking Truth accept this premise, but before one can understand it he must be *consciously* in Spirit, for the things of God are spiritually discerned.

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

2. It is not necessary that one be fully aware of his spiritual nature or his spiritual identity before he begins the study of spiritual science. One's consciousness is quickened by Truth, and if these lessons are studied faithfully, the living word of Truth that is in them will enter into one's mentality, and will quicken the faculty of understanding.

3. The very foundation of Truth is right understanding of God. Everyone has some idea of a Being who is supreme. This idea is often very indefinite, and many persons would have difficulty in expressing it. Let us ask ourself definitely what God is to us -- what our idea of Him is.

4. The concept of God as a large, powerful man seated on a throne far away is erased when spiritual understanding illumines the mind. Jesus said, "God is a Spirit." Divine Mind and Spirit are virtually the same. If we know about Mind, we know about Spirit or God. We perceive that the whole universe is moved by one immanent intelligence and power. Realizing that God is the omnipotent Mind, we have a principle for a philosophy that will answer every question that we ask.

5. People sometimes say: "God as Principle seems cold and abstract. Is there no personal God?" When we understand and realize that God as Spirit is individualized in man, the abstract concept gives way to an indwelling, concrete identity that *seems* personal but has none of the limitations of personality. God is not a personality in the sense of being in

any way apart from man's own self. Anything is personal when it is one's own possession. God is personal to us when we become aware of Him as the Father-Mind or Christ Mind within us and turn to it as our counselor, guide, and friend. God is to us whatever we conceive Him to be. When we learn the essential nature of God (Absolute Good) through becoming acquainted with Him in our mind, when we learn that God is wisdom, love, power, good, then we will produce experiences of wisdom, love, and goodness. Jesus so fully recognized and acknowledged this presence and power that He could say, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30), and "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

6. God is individualized in each one of us as inspiration, life, strength, wisdom, power, and love, and any good we can conceive. To know God in this personal way, we need to get very still, to withdraw our attention from everything in the outer and direct it within us, centering it near our heart. Then we can repeat quietly and confidently, "Thou only," knowing that we are speaking to the Father within us -- and we feel His loving, quickening presence. We come to realize that we are not alone and that God is not a cold, abstract principle too far away to have loving compassion for us. We find that He is near us, even within us, loving more than earthly parents love their offspring. "Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet" (Tennyson, "The Higher Pantheism").

? Explain God as Law.

7. The realization that God is Principle forms a sure foundation for faith. It is the assurance that the everlasting arms of Being are ever present to support; that perfect, unchanging law directs the whole universe. The "Father of lights" is the steadfast Spirit "with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning" (James 1:17). God as Principle is the unchangeable life, love, substance, and intelligence of Being. Principle does not occupy space nor has it any limitations of time or so-called matter; it exists eternally as the one underlying source or cause out of which all proceeds.

8. Divine law is without variation. It is never changed to suit the convenience of man but is "the same yesterday and today, yea and forever" (Heb. 13:8). When man understands this law and conforms to it, then "all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26). It will be noted from the foregoing that there are two phases of Principle:

1. There is the passive phase or essence which we designate as the "Source," from which everything proceeds. It is the great reservoir of unexpressed good, the mind substance in

which all ideas inhere.

2. There is also the active phase, the law, the "Cause," which is the rule or the working power that produces the results.

9. A parallel may be found in the principle of mathematics or of music. Arithmetic is probably the simplest part of mathematics. The principle or foundation of arithmetic is the unit. All numbers proceed from the unit and are related to it and to one another according to the value of each. The value of a number remains forever the same, and three never can be the same value as six nor can six ever be the same value as nine. A simple illustration of principle, looked at as rule or law, is that two times three are six. If we know the value of numbers, then wherever we use this rule or law we know that the result will be the same regardless of whether it applies to apples, horses, stars, or dollars. As an outer symbol of the numbers, we use figures. The figures themselves have no value; they are simply a *form* we use to symbolize values.

? Explain God as Divine Mind.

10. God as Principle is the one infinite Mind in which all ideas inhere, the unit, the essence, the substance that is the beginning, the origin, the foundation of all this is. As used in the first chapter of Genesis, "In the beginning God" (Gen. 1:1), *beginning* has nothing to do with time but has reference to the primordial substance from which everything proceeds. Just as we study the principle of mathematics and learn the value of the numbers, so must we study the attributes of God, those ideas that inhere in the primordial substance, and become acquainted with their character.

11. All things in the universe function according to law and order. The same is true in the spiritual realm. God as Principle is that fundamental Truth or law from which all other laws or principles proceed and which from the beginning is of God's very nature -- Absolute Good. God as Principle is impersonal in His action, in producing an effect for every cause. Man may study the principle of mathematics until, like Einstein and others, he becomes a wizard at unfolding and solving its intricacies. The principle of mathematics then becomes such a personal thing to him that it reveals to him the answer to any mathematical problem.

12. Through meditation, concentration, prayer, and the silence, we associate with ideas that inhere in the mind substance that we call God. By becoming familiar with the character and value of these ideas, in our own consciousness, we make ourselves open and receptive channels through which God as Principle may express. When we know spiritual values and spiritual laws, we will know just how to relate, interrelate, apportion, and

make righteous use of divine ideas. Then we are able to work wonders in handling any situation that arises in life. Since God is Principle, in this capacity He moves as law or the governing power in all creation. Not until we have consciously woven divine principles into our human consciousness can we be sure of our results. The unfolding of the knowledge of divine principles is an individual matter.

13. We shall study the One Almighty God as Principle, as Mind. Different nations and religions have different names for this One, whom they recognize as supreme. The Christian and Jew call Him God; the Hindu, Brahma; the Muhammedan, Allah. Metaphysical students call Him First Cause. This sounds abstract and may be unsatisfying to some unless they know also that this Cause is Absolute Good and that it is manifest in the least as well as in the greatest of its creations.

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The God Within

? What is meant by "God immanent in the universe"?

14. God is all-pervading Spirit, the life and intelligence permeating the whole universe. Immanent means "indwelling." When we say that God is immanent in the universe we mean that God dwells in and reveals Himself through forms. We mean that God pervades every atom of the realm of manifestation, the realm known to the five senses. God "transcendent" is absolute, unbounded Spirit; but God "immanent" is Spirit dwelling within the form. Every form of manifestation owes its existence to this indwelling God, and any human form can achieve immortality only as it is lifted up and transmuted by this saving and redeeming God that dwells in and operates through it. Paul clearly sets forth the revelation of God both transcendent and immanent in these words: "Over all, and through all, and in all" (Eph. 4:6). "In him we live, and move and have our

being" (Acts 17:28).

? How does God dwell in man?

15. We should seek earnestly to know the all-pervading, omnipresent One. When we clearly discern the science of God-Mind, we shall understand the mysteries of creation. If we understand that Spirit and Mind are synonymous, we can readily see that there is no mystery about spiritual things, for they are not far removed from our daily thoughts and experiences. The text, "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor. 3:16), simply means that God dwells in us as our mind dwells in the body. God creates and moves creation through the power of His Mind, and the highest manifestation of God-Mind on this planet has built for itself "a temple of the living God" (II Cor. 6:16). This creative idea immanent in man has built from universal substance a form through which this individualization of God is manifesting itself. Through our minds we shall find God and do His will, for God dwells in man as I AM, Jehovah God, and expresses in man's soul as the superconscious or Christ Mind -- as the cause and ruler over the body, its earthly temple.

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Our Understanding of God

? Is man capable of understanding God?

16. To know God as Principle helps us to understand many things about Him that we cannot conceive when we think of Him as "personality." For instance, if we know Him as Principle, we can readily understand how He can be omnipresent. The principle of mathematics is everywhere present. Anyone anywhere can use it, and even if millions of people are using it at the same time, there is no lack of it, no friction, no discord because of the many who are using it to solve problems. All receive its full benefit as wholly and as freely as one individual would if he were the on-

ly one using it.

17. To know God as Mind helps us to understand omniscience. Science implies orderly knowledge, knowledge that is systematic and arranged with reference to general principles that are interrelated and interactive. Omniscience is all orderly knowledge. God, Divine Mind, embraces all knowledge and understanding, and is the origin of all ideas, the source of every expression of true intelligence. Mind is the essence, the substance, in which ideas live and move and have being, just as fish live and move and have being in water. Mind is wholly immaterial and is all-pervading. God-Mind cannot be separated or divided; hence it is not strictly correct to say that man's mind is a "part" of Divine Mind because this implies separation. Man has consciousness in Divine Mind. The expressions of mind that have consciousness *in* Divine Mind manifest only bits of its knowledge so that there seems to be a myriad of minds, each with its own knowledge. Intelligence in individuals is Mind expressing itself as consciousness. All knowledge, wisdom, and understanding are expressions of ideas in the one Mind, pressing forth through different channels according to the capacity of each channel. When man thinks that he has a mind separate from God-Mind, he builds a state of consciousness that is adverse to Truth. The Scriptures call this adverse state the "adversary" or "Satan."

18. Mental laws are being discovered and studied as never before in the world's history, but those who are investigating nature and her laws simply from the intellectual and physical viewpoints must fall short of complete understanding because they fail to trace all things back to the causing Mind. The objects we see in nature are but symbols of ideas. There is an idea back of everything that appears.

💡 "The material forms that we see about us are the chalk marks of a mighty problem being outworked by the one Mind. To comprehend that problem and to catch a slight glimpse of its meaning, we must grasp the ideas that the chalk marks represent; this is what we mean by studying Mind back of nature" (Charles Fillmore *Christian Healing* 12-13).

19. To deal with nature effectively one has to discover what particular idea is manifesting itself, and deal with that idea.

Studying nature alone, one finds apparently contradictory laws in operation. Studying ideas, learning their character and the right relation between them, one finds harmony and gains true knowledge. He is able to comprehend the creation of the Almighty by grasping the ideas in Divine

Mind. In this way we are "studying Mind back of nature."

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Divine Ideas

? What is man's inheritance from God? How is it brought into manifestation?

20. Man is the offspring of God, Divine Mind. He is God's idea of Himself and as such is capable of comprehending the one Mind from which he springs; he is never for an instant separated from the ideas of Divine Mind. He has only to open his consciousness to receive whatever understanding he requires. Man is created in the image and after the likeness of God. In the book *Christian Healing*, page 13, Charles Fillmore states quite clearly the importance of ideas:

💡 "Divine ideas are man's inheritance; they are pregnant with all possibility, because ideas are the foundation and cause of all that man desires. With this understanding as a foundation, we easily perceive how 'all ... mine are thine.' All the ideas contained in the one Father-Mind are at the mental command of its offspring. Get behind a thing into the mental realm where it exists as an inexhaustible idea, and you can draw upon it perpetually and never deplete the Source."

21. Many of us do not appreciate the word *idea*. An idea is a live thing, and it will express itself in some way. In order to express divine ideas it is our part to study God-Mind, learn the right relation and order of the realm that produces the manifest world. Divine ideas are truly expressed when limited thoughts of self are put aside; when we are ready to acknowledge God as all, the only Presence and the only Power.

22. The "kingdom of heaven" so often referred to by Jesus, the kingdom

that He prayed might be brought into reality on earth, is the realm of harmony within that results from laying hold of the ideas of the kingdom of God, or Divine Mind. "Thy kingdom come ... on earth" (Matt. 6:10) is a prayer that the emanation of spiritual ideas from the kingdom of God within, into the thoughts of men, will set up right states of consciousness followed by harmonious conditions. Through the development of the "kingdom of God . . . within you" (Luke 17:21) will be fulfilled the prayer,

✍ "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth" (Matt. 6:10).

23. In order to express God's kingdom on earth, man must first comprehend and establish it in his own consciousness. He enters into conscious unity with Divine Mind (or the kingdom of God "within you") through coming to the realization that "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). In other words, he eliminates from his consciousness all thoughts that do not accord with Absolute Good, thus producing a state of harmony (heaven) within his own mind. This elimination of untrue concepts and the establishment of true ideas within man cause him naturally and without effort to come into right relations with his fellow man. Thus he has allowed the kingdom of God to come through him and enabled heaven or harmony to be established "on earth."

24. Scripture asserts that "the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21), but that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2). The deeper meaning of the word *heaven*, from the word *auranos* which Jesus probably used, is "expanding." As man's human consciousness is developed spiritually and he becomes conscious of the kingdom of God and its inhering ideas, his consciousness expands so that the ideas of the kingdom of God may be expressed. The true expression of these divine ideas produces order, peace, and harmony in the outer world.

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Jesus and Substance

? From what source did Jesus feed the multitude?

25. Jesus understood the realm of ideas or, as he termed it, "the kingdom of God ... within you" (Luke 17:21), and He drew upon it continually.

26. All that goes to make up the visible universe is held in the Mind of Being as ideas of life, love, substance, and so forth. These ideas, like the tones in music, may be combined in many ways and thus produce infinite variety in expression. There is a right combination that constitutes the divine order, the kingdom of heaven on earth. Jesus Christ admonished His hearers to "seek ... first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (Matt. 6:33 A.V.). We often use the quotation, "Seek ... first the kingdom," but do we not sometimes overlook the part of the quotation that has to do with the right use, or knowing the law of the right relation, of all ideas? Our real power lies in knowing how to use these powers of mind. The right relation of ideas and the science of right thought will form an important part of the subsequent lessons of this course.

27. It was from the inexhaustible idea of substance that Jesus increased the loaves and the fishes and fed the multitude. He had faith in the omnipresence of God, the all-providing essence that is in us all, through us all, and around us all -- "In him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28). Jesus had made Himself consciously one with this omnipresent substance through His faith, His love, and His devotion. He knew the one Presence and the one Power so completely that He was identified with substance. He had faith that His thought was one with the Mind of God and could, therefore, materialize out of this substance that which was needed to meet the need of those who hungered. It was an opportunity for Him to help His fellow men and also to glorify God, by putting into operation the spiritual law with which he had made Himself so familiar. His recognition, faith, and love acted as a magnet that drew into manifestation what was needed at the time.

? What idea was back of Jesus' work in healing the sick and raising the dead?

28. As Jesus had familiarized Himself with the idea of substance, so also had He become acquainted with the life idea. He understood what it is to live abundantly, to have abundant life -- life without beginning and without end. Because of this consciousness, He could make use of the life idea in healing the sick and raising the dead, and His familiarity with the idea

enabled Him to overcome death in His own organism. He undoubtedly knew that a divine idea never passes away, that life is always present in all its purity, and that what man needs is to become conscious of the presence and power of life.

Jesus' mighty works were done in the consciousness of oneness with the Father. "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30) was His manner of demonstration, and it must be ours. We must follow Him, keep His sayings, do as He did, if we expect to obtain the same results that He obtained. We must definitely acknowledge our oneness with God as Jesus did.

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Jesus and Human Beings

? How shall we do the works that Jesus did?

29. We may do the works that Jesus did by coming into the consciousness of Divine Mind (Spirit, the Father within) which Jesus recognized as the One who did the work, and by bringing its ideas into expression and eventual manifestation.

Mind has ideas, and ideas have the power of expression. These steps in mental development should be well fixed in the understanding, for all manifestation is the outer expression of ideas held in mind. In order to do the "greater works" (John 14:12) that Jesus said we should do, we must make conscious contact with the inspiration and the power that enabled our Elder Brother to express God-Mind perfectly. For a musician to make music three things are needed: (1) the idea that he is seeking to express; (2) the ability or power to perform; (3) and the instrument on which to make the music audible. If man would play the harmonies of heaven, he must first establish contact with ideas in God-Mind; then he must hold to the needed idea through all difficulties. He must have faith that the

idea needed can be manifested through him because he is a vehicle for divine grace. His body and affairs are the instruments through which he expresses thoughts in the personal realms of consciousness, so these must be responsive to the keynote of love, otherwise there will be discord.

30. Jesus Christ said, according to the Authorized Version, "wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:40 A.V.). Man is "in training" to enable him to carry on the "Father's business." In the business world a boy may begin as a messenger and learn a business from the ground up. He must study and engage in all phases of the work. So it is with man in his spiritual progress; he must know what God is, what the aim and purpose or the will of God is, and then he must seek to accomplish that purpose. The best way to broaden our concept of God is to study Him from the standpoint of His attributes or ideas; i.e., study Him as life, power, love, substance, as everything that we can conceive as belonging to His nature. If we study God as power, the one supreme force of the universe, we will come to understand what is meant by "the omnipotence of God."

31. Not only must we study the one Mind as the source of all ideas, but we must let these ideas unfold so that they may be brought into manifestation in our life. We must make conscious union with Divine Mind. The point of contact is a willingness and a seeking on our part -- "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matt. 7:7). The term *consciousness* (as has been very evident throughout this study) has a twofold meaning: It is direct knowledge or perception of the presence of an object, state or sensation, and it also refers to our mind or our soul. We frequently refer to the "human consciousness."

💡 "Man's consciousness is the totality of his conscious states ... The word *conscious* applies primarily to that which is felt as within one's self. . . .it is made up of desires, sensations, emotions, thoughts, feelings, perceptions, any soul quality. . . .man thinks and man feels, and the result is consciousness" (Series 1 Lesson 6 Annotation 5).

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Human Beings and Consciousness

? Why are we not always conscious of our oneness with God?

32. Very often we find the words *aware* and *conscious* being used synonymously, but in the strictest sense this is not accurate. The following quotation is very clear on this point:

💡 "Aware pertains to that which is external to oneself, to outer impressions driven inward; conscious, to that which is internal, to the inner feeling that may be held within or be forced out to manifest itself in reaction of some sort." (The above quotation is taken from a book, now out of print, by John Opdycke.)

33. Consciousness is related to what a person has actually experienced, either mentally, emotionally, or physically. Then the question may arise, "If we are the offspring of Divine Mind, why are we not naturally conscious of its presence and of our oneness with it?" The answer is that while we may be aware of being sons of God through intellectual study or our religious beliefs, we do not actually feel this to be true. Thus our belief in separation has produced states of mind that have formed a "consciousness of separation."

34. We are not always conscious of our oneness with God because of the states of mind that have accepted belief in God as a Being apart from us, and of our self as merely a flesh-and-blood being. Part of our divine inheritance is free will, and this means freedom to think, feel, speak, and act as we choose. If we believe in separation from our Creator, then our thinking, feeling, speaking, and acting build a consciousness of separation, and we are not conscious of our oneness with God.

? How are we awakened to the knowledge of God?

35. No one can impart Truth to another. It must be individually experienced, and it is experienced only as we become conscious of it. Meditation and prayer are the processes by which we first become aware of the truth of our relationship to God, but it is only as we enter into the silence that we are actually awakened to His Presence and are then conscious of our oneness with Him. The quickening of our soul to the knowledge of God involves definite action on our part; our positive, Truth-filled words

(affirmations) become the invitation to the God-Presence to reveal itself to our soul.

36. The third chapter of the Gospel of John is very enlightening with regard to the development of divine consciousness or the awakening to the knowledge of God (John 3). The following quotation sums up the "True Character of God" and our relation to Him.

"The truth is then: That God is Principle, Law, Being, Mind, Spirit, All-Good, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, unchangeable, Creator, Father, Cause, and Source of all that is;

That God is individually formed in consciousness in each of us, and is known to us as 'Father' when we recognize Him within as our Creator, as our mind, as our life, as our very being;

That mind has ideas and that ideas have expression; that all manifestation in our world is the result of the ideas that we are holding in mind and are expressing;

That to bring forth or to manifest the harmony of Divine Mind, or the 'kingdom of heaven,' all our ideas must be one with divine ideas, and must be expressed in the divine order of Divine Mind" (Charles Fillmore *Christian Healing* 16)

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ORIGINAL ANNOTATIONS FOR THE TRUE CHARACTER OF GOD

💡 Here are the *Annotations for Series 2, Lesson 3, The True Character of God*. These questions and answers were used to “grade” papers and so they represent the “correct answers.” We’ve included them in this course guide to provide a second look at what the Fillmores wanted their students and ministers to know.

Aspects of the Nature of God

? 1. What is God?

God is Spirit, Divine Mind, Father, Being, Truth, Creator, Principle and Law, Source and Cause of all that is; All Good, Absolute Good, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience. (See Lessons in Truth Lesson 1 Annotation 1.)

The Sanskrit equivalent of the word God means "shining." This "shining" may take many forms according to the channel through which it pours. Therefore, it may appear to man as power, love, wisdom, goodness, law, abundance, Truth, strength, and so on. (See Chapter One, paragraph 23, of Christian Healing 16.)

Behind the outpouring, the "shining," stands the immutable Source of all -- eternal, creative Divine Mind, the Principle of Absolute Good which upholds and in-forms the universe and is, therefore, Being, omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient.

"Divine Mind -- God-Mind; ever-present, all-knowing Mind; the Absolute, the unlimited, Omnipresent, all-wise, all-loving, all-powerful Spirit.

"There is but one Mind, and that Mind cannot be separated or divided, because, like the principle of mathematics, it is indivisible. All that we can say of the one Mind is that it is absolute and that all its manifestations are in essence like itself" (The Revealing Word, p. 56).

? 2. Is God a person? Explain fully.

God is not a person. The word *person* implies a human being with desires, passions, frailties, limitations. God is changeless, limitless, passionless. When we consider God as Principle only, He appears too abstract, too far beyond the human conception to inspire the trusting love of the human heart which makes the relation a personal one.

However, God as immanent Spirit individuated in man takes on a personal character but has none of the limitations of human personality. As immanent Spirit, God seeks to reveal Himself in an infinite creative plan with man as a center of consciousness through which to express His love for all creation. In this plan man is known as the Son of God, the beloved of the Father.

God is the Absolute; man is His relative, learning to express God's nature in its fullness. (See Lessons in Truth Lesson 2 Annotation 3.)

? 3. What is God as Principle? as Law?

God as Principle is the Genesis and Revelation of our Bible, while all that is contained in between is the working of the law. 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. The character, the name that is given the ideas, designates the native elements that are inherent within them.

"Principle -- Fundamental Truth. Divine Principle is fundamental Truth in a universal sense, or as pertaining to God, the Divine. It is the underlying plan by which Spirit (God) moves in expressing itself" (The Revealing Word, p. 156).

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).

Law is invariable in its action, the same for everyone, in any place, at any time, under all circumstances and conditions. Principle is always univer-

sally in action through the law inhering within it but creation (including man) must avail itself of the law of good in order to produce perfect results.

? 4. What is meant by "God immanent in the universe"?

Immanent means indwelling. "God immanent in the universe" means the ideals of God-Mind reproducing mental forms and then manifesting themselves through these forms as shapes. Every manifestation is the embodiment of an idea.

"God immanent in the universe" is Spirit dwelling within the form as life, intelligence, and substance. God immanent is the perpetual urge within every form of life to perfect its form and fulfill the purpose for which it was created.

God immanent in man is the "only begotten Son" (John 3:16) that the Father gave to the world as the inspiration of every created thing. Cradled in substance, the creating ideas are fed by substance, and out of substance grow the forms in and through which the ideas are manifested. The knowledge that God dwells at the center of our being, that He is the life, substance, and intelligence in every cell of our body, gives us the key to all wisdom, eternal life, and unending power.

? 5. Explain omniscience.

The word *omniscience* comes from two Latin words: *omnis*, meaning all, and *scientia*, meaning infinite knowledge. Omniscience is therefore knowledge that is infinite, unbounded, complete; intelligence that is orderly and related to unchanging principles. It is the one science out of which all sciences are produced.

Divine intelligence is Divine Mind in its passive, unrelated character; knowledge is intelligence expressing itself as related ideas in the human consciousness. Wisdom is knowledge that is shaped by divine order and judgment; it is the righteousness (right-use-ness) of the kingdom of God, the perfect activity and expression of the primal, passive, unrelated intelligence of God.

Omniscience is the unrelated, the related, the expressed, all in one. It includes all stages of the birth, growth, relation and inter-relation, progress, expression, and manifestation of its offspring.

? 6. Explain omnipresence.

Omnipresence, like omniscience, applies to God as the universal Spirit of Good. It means all or everywhere present, and in its completeness includes both omniscience and omnipotence.

Omnipresence designates the infinite, eternal, immutable, all-pervading substance that is the source, cause, and sustenance of all being in its absolute wholeness (holiness). Omnipresence is the substance idea, the "body of God" (i.e., the embodiment of all good). Omnipresence is the passive phase, the Mother aspect of Spirit. It embraces all being in the Absolute and holds within it all intelligence, life, purity, power, love, and joy. It is stronger than any need, greater than any circumstance, more powerful than any personality. In it are order and judgment and all things in their right relation.

Omnipresence includes the activity of the Holy Spirit (third phase of the Godhead or Holy Trinity) ever seeking to have the righteousness of God-consciousness move through man as the expresser of divine ideas. It is the all-pervading Good in which "we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). In this all-satisfying Presence there can be no loneliness, no lack, no suffering, no separation.

? 7. Explain omnipotence.

The true meaning of the word *omnipotence* is all-power. It is also a name for God as the only Power in the universe. Omnipotence is the creative action of the Holy (whole) Trinity. It is also the power back of the creative Word, the authority and rulership of the absolute, dynamic principle of Being (God). As the power back of the Holy Spirit, it is the divine breath moving upon the face of the waters at creation, the same creative breath that made man "a living soul." Omnipotence is the dominion and authority idea, the active phase, the Father aspect of Spirit.

Omnipotence is also the will of God expressed in man through definite, purposeful ideas; it is the creative life within these ideas. It is the urge of the indwelling Christ seeking always to manifest its likeness. Man may at will draw upon this power in direct ratio to his faith in it. Man is often awed by the majesty of God as omnipotence and thinks that in comparison his own powers are exceedingly limited. It is man himself who limits the power of God in him. There is an inexhaustible and equal distribution of power throughout the universe, and man may have whatever degree of it his consciousness is ready to appropriate.

The God Within

? 8. How does God dwell in man?

God as Spirit dwells in man as the life principle; as an offspring of God, man is a spiritual being, and his spiritual heritage is no less than the attributes (ideas) of God. God dwells in man even as man dwells in God.

Man is a center of consciousness through which God-Mind expresses. "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor. 3:16). God created man out of Himself; that is, He created man out of Mind substance as a perfect image of Himself. Man was thus endowed with the holy (whole) majesty and immaculate purity of God, the transcendent One, who alone is all good, and the source of all creation.

God dwells in man as the I AM, the Christ, Jehovah, Superconscious (or Christ Mind) in the same way that life and intelligence dwell within a seed. This indwelling image is God-Mind taking form in human consciousness and seeking perfect expression as man. In this center of consciousness the ideal lives and ever seeks to manifest the likeness of itself.

? 9. Explain God as the one Mind.

God as the one Mind is the originating source of all that is, acting through the movement of the ideas that make up Mind. Life is animation. The word *animation* came into our language from the Latin *animus*, meaning mind. The word *spirit* came from the Latin *spiritus*, meaning to breathe, to live. In this sense spirit and mind are synonymous terms.

In Gen. 1:1 we read, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." God ideated, imaged the heavens (the ideal) and the earth (the mental picture of the ideal). Then in a definite plan for the universe and man, Genesis gives us the other steps, all of which are to be taken through thought.

God, the Principle of Absolute Good is alive, active as the universal Mind substance -- omnipresence -- creates and sustains good in an orderly way in man and in the universe. Substance is the totality of God and life is the action, the expression of this completeness working out a definite plan. God inspirits (inspires) all of His creations with consciousness. All being, all living, all doing, all interest, all exertion, all movement is the expression of the life idea as it works in and through the passive substance or

"body of God," making it active and productive.

Mind and thought are one and are inseparable. They are Principle and its way of expression. The perfection or imperfection of the manifestation is due to the character of the thought, the mental picture, that man conceives in interpreting the ideal.

? 10. What is meant by studying Mind back of nature?

Nature is considered in this question as the system of all phenomena, the physical universe. Mind is also considered in its philosophical meaning as the conscious element or factor in the universe, the underlying Spirit or Intelligence or Mind contrasted with matter. Seeking the origin, the creative cause (the idea back of the form) of mental and physical phenomena is the meaning of "studying Mind back of nature."

A fundamental premise of the Unity teaching is the equation of God with Mind, in which is involved the essence of all ideas or archetypes of natural phenomena. The ideas are conceived to be complete or perfect. Natural phenomena are in the process of evolving, unfolding, or fulfilling these inherent ideas corresponding to the degree of consciousness of the particular phenomenon.

Man alone among known phenomena has evolved the capacity to think and to reason with his mind beyond the physical, to seek underlying causes and operative laws (ideas) that natural phenomena might be more nearly like their spiritual patterns (ideas). Studying the Mind back of nature is the effort to know God that He might be expressed and experienced with increasing adequacy in and through His channels of expression. It is the search for Truth.

Our Understanding of God

? 11. Is man capable of understanding God?

Yes, man is capable of understanding God because, created by and of God, he is of the same nature as God. As the image of God with the power to bring forth His likeness, man is capable of understanding God, for there is no limit set to his consciousness, his understanding.

God as Absolute, formless Being, through the fusion of wisdom and love, conceived in substance the image of Himself that was to grow and develop into His likeness, into His same transcendent nature. One can no more

think of God without thinking of good than he can think of a singer without a song, mind without ideas, or ideas without life, activity, expression.

Spiritual man is infinite in nature and as a living soul, a self-conscious being, is capable of understanding infinity even though as manifest man he may seem finite. That man is self-conscious as well as spiritual is evident. Spiritual man is related to the living God as His son; the concrete expression or manifestation of that son is manifest man. Jehovah God (or the Lord) represents the development of wisdom, and Jesus Christ finishes the development of man through love.

Divine Ideas

? 12. What is man's inheritance from God?

Divine ideas inherent in the nature of God are man's inheritance from God, but in order to come into this inheritance man must be ready to receive it as well as to claim it. Infinite Mind or God cannot inspire man with divine ideas before his human consciousness is ready to receive them. Until that time, the ideas are of no practical use to him because they pass him by through his nonrecognition. They fall by the wayside, fall on stony ground, fall where the weeds of error-thought choke them out.

Our part is to prepare our human consciousness, through denial, for the reception of divine ideas, as carefully as the agriculturist prepares the soil for the planting to be done in its season. Too often human beings fill their consciousness with thoughts of crime, disease, war, and poverty. We often cultivate these unconsciously through conversation about them, and through fear, instead of by clearing and preparing our "earth" -- the human consciousness -- for the seeds of divine ideas. Hence, our limited beliefs prevent our coming into our "real" estate, the Jesus Christ consciousness.

? 13. How are divine ideas brought into manifestation?

Divine ideas are brought into expression through the divine Logos, the Word of God, (the "God said" of Genesis) which is the creative power of Divine Mind. As the Word moves through man and all creation, the ideas are made manifest according to the need of the species.

So far as man is concerned, he brings divine ideas into manifestation through his thinking and feeling. The lesson material quotes from Christian Healing 13, in which the following sentence appears:

"All the ideas contained in the one Father-Mind are at the mental command of its offspring."

Though ideas are brought into expression through the Word of God, man as a free will being must make the claim *mentally* in order for them to manifest in his life as the fulfillment of his needs. In Lessons in Truth Lesson 10 Annotation 3 we find reference to the incorporation of life and love into soul, body, and affairs and as this annotation covers some of the points pertinent to the present question, we quote:

"In our true nature, our spiritual self, the Christ in us, we already have life and love and all the other divine ideas, but it is only as we consciously accept them by our thinking and feeling that they become active in our own consciousness. These qualities are then worked out in body and affairs as actual experiences."

Jesus and Substance

? 14. From what source did Jesus feed the multitude?

Jesus fed the multitude from the substance idea in Divine Mind. The multitude numbered five thousand plus. The visible resources were five small loaves and two little fishes. Andrew said, "What are these among so many?" (John 6:9). Jesus recognized the loaves and fishes as symbols of the abundance of omnipresence, the unfailing substance and rich ideas of increase. He did not allow the inadequate outer supply to blind His vision to the reality of God's all-providing essence everywhere present and instantly available as man's all sufficiency in all things. Looking up, He spoke words of thanksgiving. He looked above the seeming outer supply to the real source of all manifestation. He kept His entire attention on substance -- not on the symbols. He had faith in this all-providing resource, as well as faith that His thought and spoken word could accomplish what was necessary to feed the multitude.

In giving thanks, Jesus made use of the spoken Word of God, which fulfills the divine law of creation and increase when it is spoken with conviction. At this high level of knowing, the idea within Jesus released the Word of God into action.

The "breaking of bread" signifies constant prayer and affirmation. Jesus' keeping His attention on God as the source of the supply implies constant blessing. This account shows us the fertility of substance when the Word of God is projected into it.

? 15. What idea was back of Jesus' work in healing the sick and raising the dead?

The idea of life, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, was back of Jesus' work in healing the sick and raising the dead. Jesus knew God as the one Mind. He also knew that Mind has ideas through which it expresses its ideals. He knew that ideas are living, eternal principles that can produce the manifestations of good when they are rightly used.

Since Mind is everywhere present and perfect, this same omnipresence and perfection must apply to the "life idea." Jesus taught, and He proved in His own body, that death of the physical form, the body, can be overcome through contact with the life idea, which in the ideal is indestructible and abundant. Having contacted the life idea, we must make ourselves *consciously* one with it. We must hold the idea of life in our mind and in our heart until it is accepted and becomes the ruling power in our consciousness. When the thinking faculty and the feeling nature are in perfect agreement with the Superconscious (realm of God ideas) the life idea and any of the divine ideas that make up our inheritance are free to express themselves in perfection. Finally, we must be responsive to divine love, for the love of life brings its manifestation that much more quickly. Like all divine ideas, the life idea is not for the benefit of the individual alone but for the benefit of humanity as a whole. The more unselfish the expression of life to all creation, the more the individual will be perfected and blessed as a channel.

Jesus and Human Beings

? 16. How shall we do the works that Jesus did?

Jesus knew that He must be the embodiment of the one Mind, one substance, one Source, one Presence, one Power. "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49). Jesus recognized and claimed God as the creative power that did the work. Note His words:

"I can of myself do nothing" (John 5:30). "The Father [the ideal, the perfect idea] abiding in me doeth his works (John 14:10). "All power is given unto me [the ideal] in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18 A.V.).

To *do* the works that Jesus did, we need to

(1) seek to understand God Mind and to identify ourselves with the source

of our being, God as divine substance;

(2) know and recognize that substance is expressed through ideas that at their center are endowed with the power of the cosmic ideal;

(3) learn to be still and *let* this perfect Mind which Jesus had, and which is ours to claim, do its perfect work in and through our whole being;

(4) have faith in its power to express its likeness through us as channels for its expression;

(5) seek to unify ourself with the divine ideals of wisdom and love -- for without a union of these two qualities of Being there can be no perfect creation;

(6) hold to these ideals or ideas through all difficulties until they so completely dominate our human consciousness that we do indeed "have this mind . . . which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5).

? 17. What and where is the kingdom of heaven?

The kingdom of heaven is man's ever-expanding consciousness of the Kingdom of God within him. The kingdom of heaven does not depend on location in space but is a state of consciousness that may be attained in any place. Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is *at hand*" (Matt. 3:2). This same reference is found also in Matt. 4:17 and Matt. 10:7. The kingdom of heaven is recognized first within the soul of each human being, but each one must seek the Kingdom of God and begin to build his own kingdom of heaven or harmony within before he can experience it in the outer world. We are told to "seek . . . first his kingdom" (Matt. 6:33) and our "seeking" is done through contemplation on divine ideas, through meditation, prayer, and the Silence.

To attain the kingdom of heaven, it is necessary to unfold one's understanding of the power of Truth to dispel all beliefs in the reality of sin, disease, poverty, and death. The kingdom of heaven is relative, individual Truth, a consciousness that is subject to the will of the individual depending on how much of the Kingdom of God the individual has awakened to. The kingdom of heaven is that realm within the soul where movement is taking place onward and upward, according to the highest ideals of the Kingdom of God of which the individual has become conscious. At any period in our life we may experience the kingdom of heaven, if we have so opened ourself to the Kingdom of God that God's blessings (ideas) are made manifest in mind, body, or affairs.

? 18. How does man enlarge his concept of God?

Man enlarges his concept of God by studying God as creative, Divine Mind from every angle. There must first be a deep desire to *know* God as well as to *know about* Him. Each one, feeling this desire for God, will begin his search; he may be guided to books, teachers, classes, but his safe plan will always be to pray, to ask God to reveal Himself. If man knows God as Mind, in which inhere all divine ideas, study and prayer given to the ideas of life, love, power, faith and so forth will result in illumination on the character of God. It is not enough just to study God as Mind only through ideas; these ideas must be rightly used, for they are alive and dynamic with creative power. Knowing God as Absolute Good requires that we relate the ideas that make up this good to our own life.

"Man has the ability to discern and understand the various factors entering into the creative processes of mind, and he is, through the study of mental laws, perceiving and accepting the science of ideas, thoughts, and words. ... he is capable of comprehending the plan and the detailed ideas of the supreme Mind" (Charles Fillmore Christian Healing 12, 13).

Human Beings and Consciousness

? 19. Why are we not always conscious of our oneness with God?

We are not always conscious of our oneness with God because somewhere in the history of the human family we have built a consciousness of separation. A writer has said that if two gateways were set before mankind, one labeled "To Heaven" and the other "To Lectures *about* Heaven," a large majority of persons would instinctively choose the second.

At the present state of development of the human family, the intellectual consciousness appears to be of prime importance. In developing this consciousness, many do not see the difference between intellectual awareness and spiritual consciousness. They think that to *know about* God and to *know* God are one and the same thing. For this reason, they are not conscious of their oneness with, their sameness to, God. To them God is a Being, a Father in heaven, separate and apart from themselves. God is always close; He is within us, but we do not always realize His presence because our interest is centered largely in outer things. The fact of God's being close does not help us unless we are *conscious* of it. So by effort we must build up this feeling of God within us, of our oneness with Him. In

doing this, we are helped by considering right values in life, placing outer conditions and things in their right relation to spiritual realities. Inherently we know the value of spiritual truths, but we need to keep reminding ourself. This is not to imply that the intellect does not have its place, for it has -- but not as a master. Charles Fillmore has this to say in Keep a True Lent 155:

"Intellectual understanding comes first in the soul's development, then a deeper understanding of principle follows, until the whole man ripens into wisdom."

? 20. How are we awakened to the knowledge of God?

We are awakened to the knowledge of God by the I AM in us seeking to express itself. We may remain unaware of our spiritual nature for a very long period, but the I AM within us (God's Presence) is nevertheless ever urging us to become conscious of our oneness with Spirit. Just as the life principle within the seed is constantly urging it to develop into plant or tree to fulfill its own plan, so the I AM, or life principle within us, is urging us to develop into the manifest son of God in order to fulfill His plan for us. As the Breath of God, the Holy Spirit, moves in us we gradually become conscious of the inner prompting. At first we may recognize it only as a feeling of dissatisfaction with life as we are living it in a limited way, and the desire for a new and higher way of living becomes our goal.

As brought out in the quotation from Keep a True Lent in the preceding annotation, our intellect is the forerunner of spiritual understanding. Literature, teachers, and best of all the examples of those who are alive in Truth catch the attention of the intellect. We begin to see something better than we have known before. This causes a desire to investigate and find out what others have that we have not, what transforms their lives and gives them joy instead of sorrow, health instead of sickness, peace instead of worry. Seeing a better way awakens a desire to realize it, and the earnest desire opens the way for revelation and guidance in the achieving of this better way. Too often individuals get a glimpse of that which they would like to have in their life experiences but without understanding and guidance they seek in ways that are not good, often taking from others rather than seeking God and allowing His laws to bring their own to them.

We need always to remember that knowledge of God comes to each soul only through the revelation of Spirit within -- it cannot be imparted by others though much inspiration may come through the example and teachings of others. Of one thing we may be sure; revelation of the truth

about God and our relation to Him will come when we desire it deeply enough and are willing to seek it through contemplation of the qualities (ideas) that make up His true character or nature, and then allow divine ideas to come alive in us through meditation, prayer, and the Silence.

RECOMMENDED READING

✍ Christian Healing, True Character of Being, Charles Fillmore.

APPENDIX

ABOUT THE FILLMORE WINGS STUDY PROGRAM

The *The Fillmore Wings Study Program* is a TruthUnity project that is dusting off and reintroducing what was Unity's foundational study program for nearly 70 years. Charles Fillmore wrote the first lesson and preached from all 18 lessons for the remainder of his life. It is the program that Eric Butterworth, Johnnie Colemon, Catherine Ponder and Ed Rabel were required to study before entering into Unity's ministry training.

These lessons propelled Unity's tremendous growth from 1909 until the mid-1970s when the concept of "distance learning" by correspondence fell out of fashion. The principles are timeless, the teaching is pristine, and the presentation is clear and direct.

Why reintroduce these lessons today? Learning by correspondence went out of fashion, but the need for clear, direct, and pristine Fillmore based lessons are needed now more than ever. While learning by correspondence fell out of fashion, many people have never learned what the Fillmores taught. What they have learned are five principles, hardly enough to establish and maintain the faith density necessary for vibrant ministries. Our job is not to promote abstract principles. Our job is to convey the Fillmore teachings as directly as possible.

The Fillmore Wings Study Program incorporates the text of the eighteen lessons as it was last published in the 1970s and is supplemented with contemporary footnotes. At the end of each lesson were approximately 20 questions for the student to answer. Teachers graded the student's answers according to an unpublished, internal document known as the "Annotations." These three components—Lessons, Questions, and Annotations—comprised the heart of the program.

The Fillmore Wings Study Program materials retain the exact text of the last edition of each lesson but rearranges things for ease of study. The twenty questions have been moved from the end of the lesson into the text of the lesson where the lesson addresses the question. The annota-

tions are made available to the student and placed after the text, also with the questions inserted where the annotations address the question. So this Fillmore Wings study guide retains the authentic Correspondence School material, only altering the order of material for readability.

Our program also inserts some new material into the study materials. Each lesson opens with an Introduction, explaining the relevance of the lesson from a very high level. The sections of each lesson also have small, blue icons with numbers inserted into the text, leading to footnotes that elaborate on the text itself. Most of the footnotes are from the *Revealing Word*, the *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary* or some other Fillmore resource. Some are, like the introductions, our own understanding of what the reader needs to know.

We recommend supplementing this volume with the *Fillmore Study Bible New Testament*, a Bible with notes and study helps embedded along side of the text, which provides students an easy way to understand the essential metaphysical truths that Charles Fillmore and his students found in scripture. The full text is available online and in printed format at:

<https://www.truthunity.net/web>
<https://www.truthunity.net/giftshop>

The *Fillmore Wings Study Program* and the *Fillmore Study Bible New Testament*, provide a clear and pristine guide to Fillmore spirituality. They also provide a focus for group study, which we call Fillmore Fellowships—study groups that meet independently or in churches. If you find these materials helpful, tell a friend, meet for coffee, start a group. No credentials are needed, only a curious mind and an open heart.

Thus, the Fillmore Wings Study Program is a contemporary dive into present-day understanding of the original course content. At present, we do not offer any credit, certification or credentialing, but we will proclaim that students who complete the learning program will have earned “Fillmore Wings.”

CONTRIBUTORS

The following people have contributed to The Fillmore Wings Program in some significant way. This collaboration project is managed by TruthUnity Ministries, which is the publisher of The Fillmore Study Program materials. In time the Fillmore Wings Study Program will become a free-standing ministry with its own board, Editorial staff and peer-review committee.



Cora Alexander, LUT. Teacher, Educational Consultant, Content Editor.



Rev. Mark Hicks. General Editor, Teacher, Publisher.

ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE

What is the Vision for the Fillmore Wings Study Program? the Fillmore Wings Study Program is a series of lessons that cover Series One and Series Two of the Unity Correspondence Course over a two-year period.

The Fillmore Wings Study Program is designed so that the eighteen lessons are covered in six three-month sessions over a two-year period. Each three-month session will cover three lessons, one per month. Here is an anticipated schedule.

The Fillmore Wings Study Program Schedule

Session	Materials	Topics
Sept, Oct, Nov	Lessons 1-3	The Silence, Healing, Prosperity
Jan, Feb, Mar	Lessons 4-6	Body of Christ, Overcoming, Demonstration
May, June, July	Lessons 7-9	God, Christ, Man
Sept, Oct, Nov	Lessons 10-12	Thoughts, Affirmations, The Word
Jan, Feb, Mar	Lessons 13-15	Prayer, Faith, Imagination
May, June, July	Lessons 16-18	Will & Understanding, Judgment, Love

THE TRUE CHARACTER OF GOD

UNITY CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL LESSONS

Series 2 Lesson 1

The Unity Correspondence School Lessons were Unity's SEE program for nearly 70 years. Charles Fillmore wrote the first lesson and preached from all 18 lessons for the remainder of his life. It is the program that Eric Butterworth, Johnnie Colemon, Catherine Ponder and Ed Rabel were required to study before entering into Unity's ministry training.

For nearly sixty-five years the lessons provided truth principles to laypeople and trained them for ministry. The lessons in the course propelled Unity's tremendous growth from 1909, when Charles Fillmore wrote the first lesson, until the mid-1970s when the concept of "distance learning" by correspondence fell out of fashion. The principles are timeless, the teaching is pristine, and the presentation is clear and direct.

Fillmore Wings is three things. First, it is a collaboration of scholars and students who study, meet, discuss the original lessons, and develop commentary and footnotes appropriate for

present-day understanding and language. We anticipate a 2-3 year timeframe for the development of commentary and footnoting.

Second, Fillmore Wings is also the content developed by the scholars and students. The most current version of each of the 18 courses is freely accessible online on TruthUnity. Downloadable PDF files for self printing is also provided. At some point the entire collection of 18 lessons, annotations, commentary and footnotes will be printed in a single, printed volume.

Third, Fillmore Wings is an online study program in development. Our scholars will eventually offer distance-learning based on our present-day understanding of the original course content. We do not anticipate offering any credit, certification or credentialing, but we will proclaim that students who complete the learning program will have earned the designation "Fillmore Wings."



FILLMORE WINGS STUDY PROGRAM

<https://www.truthunity.net/wings>