

Quotes from Joel on Protective Work¹

As we work to fully grasp and discern the essence of some aspect of Joel's teaching, it can be helpful to consider many different quotations about that particular subject. This document offers a collection of several quotations from Joel on the subject of protective work. Please note that page references for books may vary, depending on which edition of the book is being used.

What is protective work?

The real nature of protective work has in a large measure been lost, and it has become little more than orthodoxy under a different name; in other words, a looking to God for protection from evil. That is not protective work. Work of that kind can only get a person into trouble. Genuine protective work is the conscious realization of omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience: the omnipresence of one Power, the omnipotence of that one Power, and the omniscience of that one Power, and our consciousness of that Power. It is not a protection by a great power from some little powers called accidents, germs, sins, or temptations. Real protective work is the daily, hourly, quarter-hourly, and minute-by-minute recognition and constant realization of divine grace as the only Power. It is the ability to realize:

You, Pilate, in any form, can have no power over me. There is only one power, God, and that is at the center of my being. I walk around with It. Where I am is holy ground. If I mount up to heaven, I take that one power with me, and if I go to hell, hell becomes heaven because that one power is with me.²

Protective work is *not* a protection *from* anything or *from* anybody. It is not protective work in that sense. It is protective work in the sense of *protecting ourselves from the operation of universal belief*. You will need constant reminders of it ... until it has become so deeply rooted and grounded in you to do this protective work that it becomes automatic and is done without conscious thinking.³

Protective work is a misnomer because the term "protective work" implies that there is some power from which to be protected. What we need to be protected from is our ignorance of our true identity, our ignorance of the source of true wisdom. Many of the things we believe are not

¹ The books and recordings from which these quotations are excerpted are currently under copy protection. This document was prepared for educational purposes under the Fair Use clause of the U.S. Copyright Act, exclusively for participants in the Goldsmith Global Online Tape Group.

² *A Message for the Ages*, p. 132

³ *The Only Freedom*, pp. 13

true at all: Many of the things we believe about each other and many of the things we believe about the world are not true at all. As one writer said almost a hundred years ago, “The trouble with people is not that they don’t know, but that they know so much that ain’t so.”¹

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Why should we do protective work?

Nothing is more important than the first half hour of your day. In it, you establish the pattern for the day. By neglecting this, you make yourself a part of universal belief, allowing any or all of the infinite variety of universal beliefs to touch you. By faithful adherence to your realization of one Power, you separate yourself from universal belief, place yourself under the guidance of Spirit, and live out from this major principle of life.

Consciousness cannot be spiritualized to the extent of being a healing consciousness until you have sufficiently known and practiced protective work so that you begin your day steadfast in the realization of one infinite Power. Then, for the rest of the day, regardless of the appearances that touch you, you are in a position to reject them as having no power because you have established yourself in that consciousness.²

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In the first half hour of waking in the morning, establish yourself in the kingdom of God. Establish yourself as living in the “secret place of the Most High” by bringing yourself under the law of God. Acknowledge God in praying for your enemies, learning not to malpractice, that is, learning not to see the errors that abound in the human beings about you, but rather refraining from malpractice by looking through the human appearance to the divinity that exists right there.

True protective work is the realization that God alone is power and that what appears to us—whether it is a belief of infection or contagion, a belief in hereditary disease or hereditary traits, a belief in astrology, or a belief of any other nature—exists only as universal belief. Impersonalize these beliefs. Do not blame them on any person, group of persons, race, nationality, or religion. What you personalize in any way will come back to your own doorstep because in the last analysis there is but one Self. What you ascribe to another, you are ascribing to yourself; and eventually it comes home to roost.

Miracles take place when you no longer hold persons in bondage to whatever belief is binding them. Seeing persons of ugly temperament as merely victims of universal belief tends to free them because you are not personalizing it and you are not malpracticing. Your erroneous

¹ *The Heart of Mysticism*, October 1958 Letter, pp. 980-981

² *Awakening Mystical Consciousness*, p. 123

concepts constitute a form of malpractice. Every lie you believe about another is really a form of malpractice.

Realize that all you hear on the radio, see on television, or read in the newspaper is the “arm of flesh.” It is without power, and you need not fear what mortal man can do because he has only temporal power, which in the face of God is no power. You have the Lord God Almighty, the All-might, the one Power. Therefore, there is no power in all the rumors of infection, contagion, wars, and accidents. If you reject these reports of evil in the world, when someone says, “I have the flu” or “I have pneumonia” or “I have cancer,” you will know better than that. You will be quick to say [within yourself], “Oh, that has no power. That is not of God. Therefore, it cannot endure.”

Rather than waiting for someone to tell you of some personal error, you could save him the experience by spending the first half hour of the morning in the realization that all human discord belongs to the activity of the carnal or mortal mind, which is not a mind. It has no law of God. It is not a power because it is not ordained of God. Immediately impersonalize and nothingize it.

When there is the rumor of an epidemic in the air, even though you have not heard about it, even if your radio and television were turned off and you had stopped the newspapers, it would manage to convey itself to you without your conscious knowledge. Many persons say, “This came upon me out of the blue” or “I wasn’t thinking this, and yet it happened.” Evil of any and every nature operates invisibly as a belief in two powers, and because this is a universal belief, it acts universally in human consciousness. To the degree you do not consciously reject it, you become a victim of it.¹

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It was revealed to me that we individually can escape ninety or more percent of all the evils that beset the world. We can live a life completely free of lack and limitation, no matter to what extent lack and limitation might hit the world. We can live in health, regardless of what extent disease hits the world. We actually can demonstrate that none of these things will come nigh my dwelling place, but we have to do it through the understanding and application of certain principles.

In our work we call this “protective work”, not meaning protective work that we protect ourselves from any people or races or religions, or that we protect ourselves from any sins or diseases. Far be it from such. Our protective work is the protection against our acceptance of these universal beliefs. ...

¹ *Awakening Mystical Consciousness*, pp. 120-121

In this protective work, the idea is that an individual, waking in the morning, is really waking up into this world, the world of laws—laws of matter, laws of mind, laws of two powers—and that he or she must consciously remove themselves from this world of two powers. Come out and be separate and place yourself under grace. Now, there is no power outside of you going to do that for you. That is why life goes on eternally showing these problems to us. We do not remove ourselves, and to be free of the world we must consciously remove ourselves from under the law and place ourselves under grace, and that must be done every single day of the week. I do not know anyone who has grown old enough or advanced enough to omit the daily conscious realization that since I am *I*, I am not under the law but under grace; that since I am *I*, there are no laws external to me, acting upon me, for *I* am the law and *I* am the dominion unto this world. This is truth, but if you don't consciously make it so in your experience, you cannot demonstrate it."¹

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Practicing protective work

It is necessary to begin every day with a form of spiritual realization that has been called protective work. This work is probably the most important part of all your work in The Infinite Way. If you sufficiently protect yourself, you will have that much less need of spiritual help to overcome anything because you will avoid those things most persons ordinarily have to overcome. Protective work is not a protection *from* anything or *from* anybody. It is protective work in the sense of protecting oneself from the operation of universal belief.

Whatever of sin, disease, lack, limitation, storms, wars, infection, or contagion may take place throughout this day is actually the operation of universal belief, carnal mind, the veil of illusion. Because this universal belief of a selfhood and a power apart from God is not God-ordained, it has no person in whom, on whom, or through whom to operate. It has no power and it has no law. As a matter of fact, it is not an "it." It is an appearance. It is an illusion. It is merely a belief that derives its seeming power by acceptance, and I hereby reject it.

I consciously reject the belief that there is any power but that of God, Spirit. I consciously reject the belief that there is a material or mental law with power because God is Spirit, and God is the only law and lawgiver. Therefore, all law must be spiritual.

Because everything that operates has to operate as law, you have nullified everything but the spiritual law of God, good, harmony, justice, equity, equality, peace, and dominion. You have to choose when you awaken in the morning whether you are going to allow yourself to serve the universal belief in two powers or whether you are going to be God-governed. You can be God-governed only by an act of your own consciousness because without this, you, just like every other human being in the world, are subject to the powers of this world, the so-called

¹ Recording #318, Side 2, 1960 Kansas City Practitioner Class, "Treatment and Law—to Grace"

powers of the carnal mind. You must bring yourself out from under the universal belief in two powers and establish yourself in the grace of God and realize:

There are no powers to operate in, on, or through me or anyone else except the power of God's grace. ...

Nothing is more important than the first half hour of your day. In it, you establish the pattern for the day. By neglecting this, you make yourself a part of universal belief, allowing any or all of the infinite variety of universal beliefs to touch you. By faithful adherence to your realization of one Power, you separate yourself from universal belief, place yourself under the guidance of Spirit, and live out from this major principle of life.

Consciousness cannot be spiritualized to the extent of being a healing consciousness until you have sufficiently known and practiced protective work so that you begin your day steadfast in the realization of one infinite Power. Then for the rest of the day, regardless of the appearances that touch you, you are in a position to reject them as having no power because you have established yourself in that consciousness.¹

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Please remember, it is only in the first months or year that living the Infinite Way may seem a bit burdensome and difficult. Be willing, for the sake of its fruitage, to undertake some of the labor that goes with this work in the beginning. In living the Infinite Way, you are doing two things all day long: You are doing protective work and you are doing treatment or healing work. You are engaged in those two activities throughout the day whether or not anybody asks you for help, and you are always using these three principles—the realization of one power, impersonalization, and nothingizing—as the major part of your work.

From the moment you awaken in the morning, you are to do protective work. Now, don't think of protective work as protecting yourself from evil or protecting anybody else from evil. Remember, protective work is the realization that there is no power from which to protect oneself. Protective work is living in the realization that since there is only one power, there are no other powers to do anything or be anything. Any other suggestion is mesmeric influence, mortal mind, the arm of flesh, nothingness.

Without protective work, even though you're not consciously thinking of accidents or discords or diseases or sins or temptations, you are permitting yourself to accept unconsciously, or subconsciously, the world's mesmerism, the world's hypnotic suggestions. In other words, this evil touches your life in very much the same way as subliminal perception operates. Something enters your consciousness which you do not see, hear, taste, touch, or smell; it enters in the form of suggestion, or mental imposition.

¹ *Awakening Mystical Consciousness*, pp. 122-123

You don't have to see a headline to know there is trouble in the world. You inwardly feel it. But even if you can't sense the trouble, you can tell it if you've awakened with a headache, or you've awakened with a dullness, or you've awakened with a sense of fear. None of this originates in you; none of this is part of you. You may not even have read that there's a flu epidemic going around, but the first thing you know you have the flu. You weren't exposed to it, you didn't consciously entertain it, but the suggestion entered your thought, your consciousness. When there is no protection in your consciousness, that is, no understanding that this is hypnotic or mesmeric influence—a mental malpractice is what it really is—unless you realize that this hypnotic influence isn't power, that it is not an emanation of God, it can take root in you and appear in any form, or every form. And it does appear. That is why you have these human experiences.

In the beginning stages of consciously living the principles, you must be alert throughout the day to suggestions of accidents, sickness, sin, wars, depression, lack, or unemployment. As soon as these touch your consciousness, it is necessary to know that these are the tempters: "This is a temptation; this is a universal mesmeric power and presence apart from God. I reject this in the realization that it is nothing but the fleshly mind, the arm of flesh, nothingness. This is not a power that is God-ordained; it has no law of God behind it." And then you're through with it. It takes a minute, but in that minute you have established within your consciousness the power of truth, and truth being infinite, nothing else can enter "that defileth or maketh a lie."

In the same way, you are always engaged in treatment or healing work. On every side you witness sin, disease, death, lack, limitation, unemployment, disfigurement, alcoholism, drug addiction, poverty. All of these confront you on the streets, in the press, on the radio, and you can't afford to be like blotting paper; you can't afford to simply let those things go into your consciousness and take root. You are consciously alert to realize, "Yes, these are pictures of sense; yes, these are suggestions. But in our understanding of one God, one power, one law, these are nothing." Then you'll find you are abiding in the secret place of the Most High, and "None of these things will come nigh thy dwelling place"—and if not literally "none of these things," few—and when they do come, you have the principles with which to free yourself. ...

Train yourself to realize that all these inharmonies are appearances. That's what Jesus called them: "Judge not after appearances; judge righteous judgement." Everything that came to his awareness was an appearance and he didn't judge by that. He let it pass by in the realization that it was only an appearance. "Thou couldest have no power over me" ... "What did hinder you?" In other words, it isn't a power. Then it can go by. As you engage in this practice, you will find two things. First of all, you will save yourself from so many of this world's woes, from so many of this world's negative experiences. But what is even more important is that once you prove this in your own experience, you will see how quickly your awareness of these principles begins to set others free. They don't have to know you are realizing the truth for them or about them, and yet you'll be surprised at how many will receive healing without knowing from which

direction it comes. And of course, since we're not out for personal glory but to realize principles in operation, we are not concerned about getting credit.¹

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The realization that God is the mind of every individual, and is everywhere present—that is protective work. That is protective work because it is a declaration to every belief of error: “Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.”

Establish that in your thought every day. Establish in your consciousness the great truth that God is the only presence and the only power, and that all this human belief in a selfhood apart from God is illusion—without presence, substance, law, reality, cause, or effect. *Establish this.* If you do not establish it, do not expect to demonstrate it. You can only bring forth as demonstration that of which you are actively conscious. That does not mean, however, that you should go around all day muttering statements of truth. But it does mean that at some time during the day, you must actively and consciously bring these truths of being to light. There should be no reason for people on this path to experience the errors of human existence. To some extent, at times, everybody comes under human belief, because of the universality of the belief. But the experience should be mild, it should not be of long duration; and it should not be tragic.²

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Always remember this—that the harmony in your daily living is proportionate to your understanding of protective work; not your understanding, but your *practice* of it. If you are not spending some time every single day *consciously* realizing that there is only one power; that there is no power in effect; that the Spirit of God in me is the only power; that the *I* within me is the only power; that this *I* within me is my rock, my fortress, my security, my peace, my health, the very health of my countenance; then you see, you're letting the law of humanity operate on you. But when you learn to do this protective work, you are becoming a law unto yourself, and then there is no law of infection or contagion, and there's no law of heredity, no law of accident that can operate on you. Do you see that?

“You separate yourself from the human law in proportion as you consciously realize: *I* in the midst of me is mighty. This *I* is the bread, the wine, the water. This *I* within me is the meat of my life. It is the fortress. It is the health of my countenance. Nothing shall in any wise enter my experience that defileth or maketh a lie, for *I* am the law unto this world. The world is not a law unto me. Do you see that?

¹ *The Foundation of Mysticism*, pp. 211-214

² *The Master Speaks*, pp. 316-317

But who can do that but you? I can put it in a book. I can put it on tape. But only you can live it, and in proportion as you live it, in proportion as you consciously keep the Word in you and you live in the Word, in that degree do you become entirely separate from this world.”¹

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Now, for your help I have given you the article called “Protective Work” in *The Infinite Way Letters* 1955, and in June 1960 there will be another in the “Across the Desk.” You will find that it is devoted entirely to a continuation of the same subject that is in the 1955 “Protective Work.” And these two writings will give you the substance of your work, always remembering this: **do not memorize; do not affirm or deny; do not make use of any made-up statements, but take from these writings the essence, the substance, and put them in your own language so that they mean something to you.**

You could recite my language, my exact words or those of Jesus if you like, but they never will really give you their innermost meaning until you learn to take them out of their quotable language, **put them in your own words** so that you have your own understanding of the essence. Then you’ll find that you’re not dealing with a shadow. Quoting—except in instruction—quoting, affirming, is merely holding onto the shadow of a thing, whereas taking the quotation, studying it, pondering it, begging and pleading with God if necessary to reveal its inner hidden meaning to you until you gain a meaning of these quotations, this is bread and meat and wine and water.²

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Let us stop for a moment and look at the human scene, not because it is so pretty to look at, but because we cannot overcome it without some measure of understanding of its operation.

A human being can never be certain that any given day will not contain for him an accident, an illness, a temptation, or a loss. These things are happening every day to countless numbers of people, and no one knows when one or more of them will come nigh his own dwelling place.

When a person learns the cause of evil and knows why these experiences continue to occur in human life, he learns how to meet the problems of each day and thereby attain freedom, harmony, joy, and peace—and what is even more important, he is equipped to serve his family, his neighbor, community, nation, and world.

In the Infinite Way, the student learns to face each day with the conscious realization of the impersonal nature of evil and of its impotence: he *consciously* knows that *I am* is God. Therefore, I am one with God, and the place whereon I stand is heaven. He realizes that where

¹ Recording #237, Side 2, 1958 Manchester Closed Class, “Instructions to Serious Students”

² Recording #315, Side 1, 1960 Denver Closed Class, “A Blueprint for Study”

God is, I am; and where I am, God is, for we are inseparably and indivisibly one—"Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." This truth is a universal truth.

Evil, regardless of its name or nature or its specific form, is impersonal, and therefore has no person in whom, on whom, or through whom to operate, and not being ordained of God, it has no spiritual law to uphold or enforce it. It is the "arm of flesh"—temporal power, nothingness. To abide in this truth is to be clad in the spiritual robe where none of these things shall come nigh thy dwelling place.

The Infinite Way student is taught that whatever he experiences must come through his own consciousness, and that, therefore, to fill consciousness with an understanding of the nature of God and a knowledge of the impersonal and impotent nature of the cause of evil is to ensure a life of spiritual harmony and service to others. The student who omits this daily conscious abiding in truth subjects himself to the universal belief in two powers, but the belief in two powers cannot operate in a consciousness that has realized God as omnipotence and omnipresence. Were it not for this acceptance of the belief in two powers, there would be no human existence, and we would all be living in a heaven on earth. Our immunity from material conditions and our freedom from mental laws are attained in proportion to our daily and hourly conscious remembrance of these revelations.

God gave us dominion over every circumstance, but we must exercise that dominion by an active, continuous consciousness of the truth of our oneness with God, and by the conscious and specific knowing of the impersonal and impotent nature of the source of error. To lay the axe at the root of material existence is to understand it as a product of mental suggestion, having no law or authority.

To live the life of grace is to realize consciously that *I* is God, and *I* in the midst of me is the meat the world knows not of—the hidden mystery of life eternal, harmonious, and spiritual.¹

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¹ *Our Spiritual Resources*, Chapter 6, in "Across the Desk," pp. 91-93. Note that this is the June 1960 "Across the Desk" that Joel refers to in a previous quotation.