

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM JOEL (12/15/18)¹

Q: “Would you say that for a student who is progressing on the spiritual path that it is more important to study your later writings?”

A: No, I really wouldn't. As a matter of fact, the later writings like *The Art of Meditation*, *Practicing the Presence*, and *Living the Infinite Way* are more especially helps to aid us in attaining that inner peace through meditation, that inner quiet, that inner calm. And while they embody the principles of The Infinite Way, they are more especially designed to help us to that period of really living this inner life, whereas the books *The Infinite Way*, *Spiritual Interpretation of Scriptures*, and the class books—*The Master Speaks* and *Consciousness Unfolding*—are the real class works and instruction in the principles.

Of course, the deepest of all of our books are the Letters. The Infinite Way Letters of 1954, 1955, 1956, and 1957² are the deepest for this reason: Right now, I'm having an experience this week in this class, which as you have already seen is a little unusual, and from which I've learned quite a bit. Now you know that it's only going to be a very short time when it is going to be appearing in the Letter because I want to share it with all those who are not here and all those who cannot hear the tape. Here we are with only one hundred and fifteen of us in this room, and it would be a sad thing if instruction such as we have had this week would be limited to one hundred and fifteen people in the world.

Through the tape recordings, it will probably reach a few thousand more. Well, that's a little better. But through the monthly Letters, there is no telling how many thousands will be reached. Therefore, I will put the very deepest things that I know into those Letters; compact them into five thousand words so that everybody who receives the Letter can have the deepest that comes out of a class. Then at the end of twelve months, you can imagine what's in that book of twelve letters. So it has been. There is nothing more precious in our entire library than Infinite Way Letters of 1954, '55, '56, and '57, and naturally what comes through this year in 1958.

So that I will say this to you: *The Art of Meditation*, *Practicing the Presence*, *Living the Infinite Way*—these I especially recommend for the purpose of introducing into our inner lives this inner quiet, this inner peace, this ability to rest in prayer and communion, but when it comes to the principles and the application of the principles and the living of the principles, then any or all of the other writings. It is just a matter of choice whether you read one or the other or all of them, because the principle remains the same in all of them. It is only the manner of presenting them that differs. It's just like the difference between Saturday night and tonight. The principle in both cases is the same, but you see the tremendous difference in the presentation.

¹ Excerpt from Recording 222, Side 2: 1958 New York Closed Class, “Mind Imbued with Truth & The Temple.” This excerpt is posted with kind permission from the Estate of Joel Goldsmith, which holds the copy protection on all of Joel's recorded classes and the copyright on the class transcripts. The full transcript of this recording is available at www.joelgoldsmith.com or by calling 1-800-922-3195.

² The Letters of 1955 through 1959 are collected in the book *The Heart of Mysticism*. The 1954 Letters are in a separate volume titled *The 1954 Infinite Way Letters*. Some books of Letters were given other titles. To see all the books of Letters, go to the “SHOP” page on www.acropolisbooks.com. In the “SORT BY” box at the top right of the page, click the down arrow and select “Books of Infinite Way Letters.”

Another thing is this: As you present the same principle a dozen times, it clarifies itself to you. Therefore, when you have read this principle back in *The Infinite Way*, and probably come across it in another form in *Consciousness Unfolding*, and then struck it again in *The Master Speaks*, and then a few times in *The Letters*, by the time you come to this class you're having no difficulty with what I'm saying. It's really the old, old story again that the more we bring this into our consciousness, the deeper it sinks.

Now when we first hear it, it is only intellectual knowledge. When we first read it, it is only intellectual knowledge. That's why it has no healing power. That's why students can go through one or two classes and say, "I'm no different than I was when I started," and it may very well be true. But watch the student after six or eight or nine classes, or after they have had two, three, four or five years of study and practice. What happens is that the truth that was first taken in intellectually begins to go from the mind down to the heart. At first it is an intellectual agreement, but later it becomes a spiritual perception. That is why the students who have been with me the longest are the ones that are doing the best work. There's nothing personal about it. There is no personality involved. It's only that the constant being with them, the constant giving to them of these principles, and the constant breaking down of material sense gradually unfolds their spiritual sense.

Now all spiritual teaching has to be like that. Nobody can impart a spiritual teaching in a book or in a class. Spiritual teaching takes place over the years. Spiritual teaching takes place through what is called time, effort, and devotion, and the amount of time, effort and devotion that the student puts in is the exact degree of spirituality they are going to take out.