

Practicing an Attitude of “Is”¹

In Recording #520, Side 1, “The New Teaching,” Joel says that the human mind must be educated out of several aspects, one of which is the belief in good and evil that produces a tendency to judge. He advocates practicing the attitude of “is” to move beyond this belief and beyond judgment. These excerpts from the writings elaborate on how we can practice this attitude of “is.”

Excerpt from *A Message for the Ages* (Chapter 6, “Not Appearances but *Is*”)

Develop the Consciousness of Is

When you are called upon for help, do not hesitate to sit down and hold up the word *is* in front of you: *is, is, is*. It is as if you were to think,

“There *is* something here, but I do not know what it is or who it is. It claims to be a person and a condition, but I know nothing about those things. I do not know how to pray. I do not know how to meditate. I must let the Spirit bear witness with my spirit. I must let the Spirit make intercession for me. So I do not know who this is, what this is, or why this is. I only know that before me there is an *is*. There is something; there is somebody. Now, Father, take over and enlighten me.”

From the depths of your withinness will come some kind of a peace-be-still to the situation, some kind of an assurance, and you will begin to see harmony.

When somebody says he is a sick human being, a poor human being, or an unemployed human being, you must remember that you have been told by the spirit of truth in you not to judge after appearances. You cannot judge what or who is before you, and so you use the word *is*. You do know that there is an *is* here: something is here, someone is here. What is it? Who is it? What is the truth about it? Then you turn within and let the divine impartation unfold. You let Wisdom reveal Itself and watch what happens.

There is not only an intuitive sense but a higher spiritual sense that reveals what we must know without thinking or reasoning. When you sit down, you do not affirm the truth; you do not deny the error. You wait, and the light from within, the illumination, the “click,” or the release comes. You do not know anything with your human mind; you do not know what has happened; yet in the course of time you receive word that the healing has taken place.

Knowing the truth is necessary only in order to have something to cling to within that gives you the human assurance of a superhuman presence and power. As you watch this, you will observe that the human mind is not necessary in spiritual healing work or in spiritual living, but that there is a divine truth which comes through to do the work.

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Go Beyond the Appearance to Is

Let us suppose that you have never seen a little rosebud before so you do not know what it is. There is only one thing that you know about it: you know that it is. You do not know that it is a flower. You do not know that it is a bud. You do not know anything about it. You've never seen anything like it before, and so you know nothing about it except one thing. You know that something is. The only thing of which you are certain is that something is here. What it is, you do not know. Why it is, you do not know.

But you can take the word *is*. Of that you are certain. Then close your eyes and become very still. If you do that, it will not be long before an impartation comes to you from within that this is a flower, a bud, a rose, or that this is something in the kingdom of God. What it is will be revealed to you, and it will be revealed, not by any human knowing since we are assuming that you have no human knowledge of it. But it will be revealed by a higher consciousness which we call the Spirit Itself.

If you were to judge by appearances when called on for help, you would be continuously faced with universal medical theories, symptoms, diagnoses, and beliefs. If you turned to metaphysical books, what would you find? Statements that you are spiritual, that you are perfect, that you are harmonious. And what good would that do? You are still complaining about your aches and pains even after you have read how spiritual you are. You might even have pages pointed out for you to read so that you, yourself, could read how spiritual you are. Instead of delving around in what is known humanly about a person and instead of delving around in books to find out what is spiritually known about him, go into the silence. Retreat inside your own being and frankly admit that you know nothing. Jesus not only said that he could of his own self do nothing, but he even said that if he talked of himself, he bore witness to a lie. You know far less than Jesus, and he knew that he knew nothing.

You have to say or admit to yourself that you know nothing about the situation; you know nothing about the person; you know nothing about this claim; and you certainly know nothing about God's kingdom. So you turn to the Father for light, for wisdom, for enlightenment, for peace, and for truth. As you learn to sit in this receptive attitude, into your waiting consciousness comes some assurance. If you can have the assurance from God that the person who has asked for help is His beloved, you are sure everything is all right and that he is in God's care. You cannot bring forth any healing through reading such a statement in a book, but when the Father Itself speaks, then you may be assured that all is well.

After a person has said that he is well or better, you still do not know what happened. You know nothing about the operation of the Spirit in your experience. You only know that with Its assurance comes a measure of release or freedom to you.

Excerpt from *The Heart of Mysticism* (March 1956 Letter: "The Part We Play")

As this principle (recognition of Christ identity) begins to take shape in consciousness, it is inevitable that the thought of some particular person or problem will come to mind, and it will be necessary to take a firm stand against the normal reaction that here is an evil that must be corrected. Right here and now you must begin the practice of dying to the personal self by not permitting such reactions. You must rise in consciousness to the place where you no longer feel that help is needed at all—not even from God! How, then, can you help? How can you express love and assistance?

The patient or student may not always understand that, in consciousness, you cannot agree that he needs help, and so, when you are asked for help, graciously consent to give it. When faced with what the world would call evil of any nature, the first thing is to retire within your inner being with the question that if it is neither good nor evil, what is it? There is only one answer: *It is!* Even though the outward appearance of sin, disease, lack, limitation, or death is evident to the human sense, it is not an actual externalized condition—it is but a mental image or suggestion in thought, like the mirage on the desert. Ask yourself if you are seeing the appearance, or that which *is*? In agreeing that it is only an appearance, an illusion, it can be disregarded entirely, because behind that appearance is the truth which eternally *is!* It is necessary to close the eyes to all appearance, judging neither good nor evil—acknowledging only that *it is*, and in this way something rather like a vacuum is created within your being, and into that place of stillness and peace Truth reveals Itself as the harmony unto the situation. Thus you are enabled to understand that "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."

This is without doubt one of the most difficult lessons on the spiritual path, but once it is mastered there will be no need for any others, because by then you will be entirely dead to the personal self and thoroughly alive in conscious union with God.

Excerpt from Recording #652, Side 1, from the 1956 Capetown First Practitioner Class, "From Within"

In the spiritual life you place no labels on the world. You do not judge as to good or evil, sick or well, rich or poor. Well now, here's a person telling you a dozen times a day on the phone how sick they are, and what's your answer? While appearances may show forth inharmony and discord, by not judging, by not agreeing that it's either good or evil, you merely know that *is, is, is, is*. *Is* is the only truth. Neither good or evil—just *is*. And then, all of a sudden from within, the divine harmony that's always there—even when it's invisible—becomes apparent. There's your secret of healing. As long as I can say, "There is neither good nor evil there," I can hold a receptive attitude in back of me as if I am always waiting: "Well all right, God, I'm agreeing that it's neither good nor evil, but you show me what it is."

Now, what happens is something like this. Here is an individual showing forth all of the qualities of sickness and I'm sitting here, "Now Father, I know that this is neither good nor evil. God alone is good, and evil has no reality, yet I'm faced with an appearance of discord. Father, reveal the truth to me." And I sit. I'm receptive, and pretty soon the Father says, "Why this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased," and the treatment's over because now the truth has been revealed—that right where there seemed to be a human being, it isn't at all. "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased. This is the child of God." Then the shadows fade away—the shadows that we call fear; the shadows that we call lack. But it all has its basis in our agreeing that that there is nothing good or evil. So don't try to substitute good for evil. Don't try to get rid of evil and put good in its place. Just acknowledge: There is no good or evil. Only God is good and evil has no reality.

Now do you follow that? Now, you'll see, too, that the human reason won't tell you that this is true, but that as you learn to meditate, that part of you which is greater than your intelligence will tell you, "This is the way, walk ye in it. The things of God are foolishness with man, but don't pay attention to man's opinion of good and evil. You stand by God's judgment that only God is good." Do you see that?

Excerpt from *The Thunder of Silence* (Chapter 4: "Who Told You?")

When we are able to rise above the realm of thought to that high place where we have no opinion whether anything or anybody is good or evil, but are willing to be a perfect transparency for the instruction of God, then God speaks in our ear and shows us the spiritual reality which exists right where that "man of flesh" who "cannot please God" appears to be ...

The belief in two powers is what traps us into vacillating between the pairs of opposites—harmony and discord, poverty and abundance, life and death, sickness and health; whereas the ability to abide in our inner being, realizing that there is only *one* power, that there is no good and there is no evil in any form, frees us and brings the peace that passes understanding.

The only devil is the knowledge of good and evil. We decide that this is good and it is so unto us, or that this is evil and so it is; whereas the truth is that "there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so." Then to be rid of the pairs of opposites, we must stop the merry-go-round of the human mind, and that actually is not as difficult or as impractical as it sounds.

I have been asked many times, "How do you stop thinking?" And I have found one way. The minute I can look at any person or condition and know that it is neither good nor evil, my thought stops, and my mind becomes quiet. That is the end of it because then there are no thoughts left for me to think about it: I do not think good of it and I do not think evil of it. All I know is that *it is*, and then I am back at the center of my being where all power is. Our mind is restless only when we are thinking about things or persons, either in terms of good or evil, but the mind is at rest when we surrender all such concepts.