

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM JOEL (4/6/19)¹

Q: How does one pray for one's enemies if one does not take cognizance of error into prayer?

A: Well, probably in the same way that the Master did when he was taken prisoner. First of all, you have to learn to put up your sword. That was the first thing he did. *"Put up thy sword."*² In other words, do not use any human means of protection or retaliation, because you are then acknowledging a power apart from God. Put up thy sword in the realization that the battle is not yours, but God's. You have nothing to do but to stand still in the realization of God. Don't fight physically and don't fight mentally, and do not wish to see vengeance wreaked on your enemy. Do not wish to see them punished, because you must take the second step, which is *"Father forgive them, they know not what they do."*³

You know, if you catch a glimpse of what has taken place in this class and realize the infinite nature of your being, recognize God as constituting your being, and see that as you go to the center of your being and have an experience, all your needs will be met on the outer plane, do you think you could ever entertain a thought of stealing or cheating or lying or defrauding? No. Well then, when you see a man out on the street stealing, what can you say except, "Father forgive him; he knows not what he does." If he only knew he has the whole allness of God at the center of his being, and he's stealing two shillings!

Isn't it funny? Sad, but it's comical too, because how nonsensical for a person to lie, cheat, steal or defraud for something less than that which he already has—and he already has all that God has. So the only reason a person lies or cheats or steals or defrauds, the only reason that a person commits any wrong, is through ignorance. If they really knew that satisfaction was to be found through a God-experience, they wouldn't be seeking satisfaction outside in the liquor halls or gambling halls and all the rest of these places of excitement where they go for only the same reason that we are here—to find peace. Only they haven't learned how to find it *this* way, and ignorantly they're out there finding it *that* way. Do you see that? It's only ignorance. It's not evil.

Oh, I have had years of work in prisons. I have never yet met an evil man—never one. Every person, and I've met some bad ones ... I was instrumental through this work in a man being released, sent back into freedom, who was a professional murderer—a man who used to murder for two hundred dollars. Just give him a name and photograph of the one you wanted killed and he delivered the body for you. (Laughter) That's absolutely true! But he came out of the prison, and he was given another chance in life. You may say he didn't deserve it, but *"though your sins be scarlet, you are as white as snow"*⁴ the minute the Christ has touched you.

Saul of Tarsus was a killer too, and he probably didn't deserve another chance, but he had plenty of chance to redeem himself and to become a very valuable instrument for God. And

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² John 18:11

³ Luke 23:34

⁴ Isaiah 1:18

Saul of Tarsus, incidentally, was the very meanest type of murderer there was on earth—the kind that murdered for religious reasons. There are no meaner ones than those, just like there's no meaner thief than the man who steals from the poor box in the church. No, no, no! Though your sins be scarlet, it is literally true that you are as white as snow the minute this Christ has touched you.

Now then, you begin first of all by putting up your sword of antagonism against those who we call enemies, and secondly, by forgiving them. Again, going back to the previous question, that does not mean that if our government calls me into service that I will not answer, because I will. And if they put a sword in my hand as a part of citizenship and rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, I will do that which is given me to do. But at the same time, I will rely on this Infinite Invisible to direct my paths in all my ways.