

**Quotes from Joel on How to Connect God with Your Life**  
(Supplementary Material for Chapter 6 in *The Art of Spiritual Living*)

**From *I Stand on Holy Ground*, Chapter 2, “From Practicing the Presence to the Prayer of Listening”**

Living the spiritual life begins with practicing the presence of God, which means living in such a way that, from the moment we awaken in the morning until we go to sleep at night, we have some conscious realization and acknowledgment of God. For example, on waking up in the morning, before jumping out of bed, wait for a few minutes and contemplate:

*This is a new day, which I had nothing to do with creating, nor had any man or woman. Where did it come from? Where, but from God? Therefore, this day must be the work of God, and if it is the work of God, it must include in it the works of God, the presence of God, and the power of God. I can begin with the activities of this day without worry and without fear because I know that since God has brought about this day, He will not leave it to its own resources. He created it and He maintains and sustains it. So I can safely trust this day to the government of God and to His presence and power.*

Only after such a realization should we make our preparations for the day. At breakfast must come the realization that there could be no food on our table or on any table but for the grace of God. Only God can bring forth crops and fruits. We can plant the seeds, but we cannot make seeds and we cannot make them grow after they are planted. Some kind of a law must take hold of a seed in order to bring forth apples from apple seeds or peaches from peach seeds. Therefore, it is by God’s grace that the food we eat and drink is provided for us.

As we go forward during the day, there is not a person who is not faced with some responsibility greater than he is able to care for. No one of us goes through life without having problems that we cannot humanly solve, and it is in these periods that we again contemplate truth as we know it, remembering that “*He performeth the thing that is appointed for me*<sup>1</sup>. . . *The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me.*”<sup>2</sup> He that brought forth this day and will bring forth night after day performs that which is given us to do. The government is upon His shoulders.

As the day unfolds, with each problem that arises or with anything in the normal course of business, we find a freedom if, instead of believing that we alone are responsible, we remember that there is a He within us that is greater than any problem in the world. There is a He within us that gives us our ideas, strength, capital, experience, judgment, and wisdom.

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<sup>1</sup> Job 23:14

<sup>2</sup> Psalm 138:8

Most of us are aware of the dangers on the highways today stemming from traffic conditions, irresponsible drivers, and those who insist on driving while under the influence of alcohol. If we are merely trusting to luck or the law of averages to keep us out of trouble, sooner or later the average goes against us. Therefore, we should never get into an automobile, board a bus, a tram, or take any other form of transportation without the realization:

*God drives. He governs, and He controls. God is the mind of every individual and the intelligence. Safety and security are God's responsibility, and God is the love enfolding all.*

Thus, our safety is taken out of irresponsible or careless hands and placed where it belongs, in God's hands.

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**From *The Altitude of Prayer*, Chapter 6, "Pray without Ceasing"**

Just as you begin your day by knowing the truth, so you retire at night with an activity of truth in your consciousness which changes the nature of your night's rest.

*I am not going to sleep as a human being. I am resting in the divine consciousness of the truth I have embodied during these many years. I am going to rest, consciously aware of the word of God alive and alert in me, whether asleep or awake.*

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**From Recording 4B, 1950 First Portland Class, "Meditation"**

To begin with, in the book *The Infinite Way*, pages 97-103, there are passages that begin on waking in the morning, and for those five pages, it gives an outline—not a formula to be followed—but an outline of some process of thought that should engage us from the moment we awaken in the morning. And I recommend that before anyone steps their foot out of bed, that they lie there awake for one, two, three, or five minutes and begin pondering the idea of the omnipresence of God.

*Here where I am, God is. Here in the beginning of this new day, God takes over. Here God becomes the directing influence of my day. I dedicate this day to the work of the Father. I dedicate this day to the life of the Father. And of course, in this day I hold within myself no condemnation, no criticism, no judgment, no fault finding, but insofar as it lies within my power, forgiveness, understanding, cooperation. I dedicate this day to maintaining the integrity of my own being, and I promise myself that insofar as I am given grace, I will not violate my own integrity, my own highest sense of right.*

Then it is time to get out of bed.

While we are preparing for the day, making our physical preparations, there is no reason why we should give thought to the problems of the day. Sufficient unto the hour is the evil of the hour. There is no reason why, while we are making our physical preparations for the day, that we can't again contemplate the idea of God, the idea of God being the only Presence and the only Power, the idea that only God can bring something to our attention during the day, the idea that only God will be active in us or in those we contact during the day. And then, instead of saying grace, we teach in this work that we are never to eat a bite or drink a drop without at least blinking the eye as a conscious, "Thank you Father," ... an acknowledgement of God as the source of our good.

When we leave the house, when we leave our office, when we leave any building or go through any door, we pause for a second, again just to blink the eye, and realize that the Christ presence has gone before us to make the crooked places straight; realize that *I* have gone before me to prepare a place for me. ... *I*, the divine Presence, the Christ, goes before me to make the crooked places straight and to prepare a wonderful place for me. In this way, I am making my conscious oneness with God throughout the day and throughout the night.

With every money that we pay out, and with every money that we receive in, there is also the same blink of the eye, the same sort of a pause to realize God as the source; to realize that we are sharing God's gift, incoming or outgoing. ...

Now then, in addition to this, we have our periods of silent meditation, which takes us a step beyond even this conscious recognition. And the purpose of the meditation is this: When we are very still and silent inside, something happens. A feeling comes to us, an awareness of the Presence—a click, I call it—or a release, and when that happens, we know the contact has been made. God is on the field and all is well. ...

We can go right on and do every bit of work necessary for us to do and still just realize as we go through a door that the divine Presence goes before me. As a matter of fact, it is only the first two or three months that we have to do this consciously; that we have to remember to do it. As a matter of fact, the first week or two, we forget it more than we remember it, and every time we forget it, we have to do it right where we are when we do remember it. And so, within two or three weeks, we train ourselves so that we never see a door without getting a guilty conscience. And we never see a piece of food or a dollar bill without a little guilty conscience until we have uttered our, "Thank you Father." Then it isn't more than four, five, six, seven, eight weeks, and it's so automatic that instead of going through the process of thinking something, we just smile a little bit, as much as to give a secret password. That smile is our password. That smile is our recognition that we know that the Father goes before us; that the Father walks beside us; that the Father comes behind us as a rear guard.