

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM JOEL (11/21/20)¹

Q: Please comment on the quotation that appears in the Infinite Way books that starts “Illumination dissolves all material ties.”

(This question is not in the transcript, but we loved Joel’s commentary on the quotation, and we “created” the question for it.)

On the first page of every one of The Infinite Way writings, there is a passage from the book *The Infinite Way*. Now while *The Infinite Way* was only published in 1947, this particular passage was written in 1936. Sitting at my desk in Boston one day, all of a sudden something wanted to be written down. I took a pad and pencil and wrote this as it came through. And of course, it had no meaning for me, so I just threw it aside and thought, “Well I hope someday I’ll know what it means.”

Eleven years later, when *The Infinite Way* was being written, this piece of paper with this on it was on top of my desk out in Santa Monica, California. How it got there, how it traveled those eleven years, or why, I have no idea, or how it got on top of the desk. But there it was, and I found a place [in the book] where it could fit, and it went in there.

Now of course, ... it is one of the major principles of The Infinite Way: “Illumination dissolves all material ties and binds men together with the golden chains of spiritual understanding.” We’ll take it bit by bit. That is clear, isn’t it, that as far as material ties are concerned, it doesn’t make any difference whether we here are related by blood, or by friendship, or by race, or religion, or anything else. Whatever our backgrounds of human relationship may have been, in our coming together in The Infinite Way, all of those ties are dissolved. They have no significance anymore.

It makes no difference now whether I’m your blood brother or blood sister or what not. That is of no importance. What counts is that we are bound together with golden chains of spiritual understanding. And what are those chains of spiritual understanding? Love thy neighbor as thyself. If we are children of God, we are heirs of God; we are joint heirs. That is our spiritual relationship, and in that relationship, we have one obligation, and that is to love one another. Love thy neighbor as thyself. Now that is our tie.

Ah yes! But that is our tie here, and again, it can’t be a quotation. It must be lived. On my part, it has to be lived so that every demand that is made upon me, I must fulfill without complaint, without question, without asking, without concern. Just obey and fulfill every demand that is made upon me by you. On your part, you must fulfill whatever it is that comes to you of love toward me. That is decided in your own mind, just as I determine in my mind what constitutes my love and my service to you. So does God enable you to know what your relationship to each other and to me must be, in order to conform to a spiritual tie of love, not a human obligation. ...

¹ This excerpt is from Recording 72B, 1954 Honolulu Lecture Series, “The Principle of Our Work.” It is posted with kind permission from the Estate of Joel Goldsmith, which holds the copy protection on the recorded classes and the copyright on the transcripts. The full transcript of this recording is available at www.joelgoldsmith.com or by calling 1-800-922-3195.

We have no human obligations. I have said this in lectures and church work before, that it's not right to say, "Oh this is your church, and you must support it." Or "This is your movement, and you must support it." Nothing doing! Nothing is yours—nothing—except to love one another, and we have no human ties upon each other, and no human rights. We only have the right to love, and that must be free will. Now, that's that.

"It acknowledges," that is, "Illumination acknowledges only the leadership of the Christ." Now you see, we do not have a book, or a man, or a woman, or a figure in history to acknowledge as leader. "We acknowledge only the leadership—our leadership within us—of the Christ." Again, "Illumination has no ritual or rule but the divine, impersonal, universal love; no other worship than the inner flame that is ever lit at the shrine of Spirit."

"This union..."—at the moment, I'm speaking of the union that binds us in The Infinite Way, but which ultimately must be understood to be the union that will bind all mankind in their recognition of the Christ—"This union is a free state of spiritual brotherhood. The only restraint is the discipline of soul." We have no rules or regulations, no rules of conduct; only that which is dictated by the soul from within us.

"Therefore, we know liberty without license. We are a united universe without physical limits ..." And that does away with state borders, national borders, international borders, and makes for that one world that Wilkie¹ wrote about. We are a united universe without physical limits, and in our individual experience, that's what we are now. Right here and right now, we have attained enough of this Christhood, of the spiritual brotherhood, that we have no racial, religious bigotries or biases. We have no national hates or fears. We understand that the life of every individual is God. The mind and the soul and the spirit is God, and in the attainment of that, we are setting others free into that same spiritual realization.

"We are a united universe without physical limits; a divine service to God without ceremony or creed." And I was glad to notice in Dr. Eisler's article yesterday on the church page of the afternoon paper, that in speaking of the Easter service to his readers, he also said that men are bound, entombed by the belief that their life is in ceremonies and in creeds and rituals, and they are mistaken. The life isn't found in those ceremonies, or rites, or rituals, but only as they live in Christ. You know how universal that is, that our ministers are free to tell that very thing today—that we don't find our freedom in rituals, in rites, and ceremonies. That doesn't mean that we shouldn't have them. Oh, every one of them is a beautiful symbol, when it is understood in its right light.

In this class, Joel does not address the last sentence in the quotation that says, "The illumined walk without fear – by grace," leaving something for us to contemplate.

¹ Joel is referring to the book *One World* by Wendell Wilkie, published in 1943.