

**1960 New York Closed Class**  
**Joel S. Goldsmith**  
**361B - The Peak of Mystical Living**

Good evening.

You have noticed that we start our work with meditation, and the more meditation we have the greater degree of spiritual receptivity we have, and the deeper the spiritual message we receive. Now the reason is this—meditation actually is the act of consciously establishing contact with the source of your being.

I will use the Master's illustration for this—that if you are one with the vine, if you abide and live in the vine, if you are one with the vine that you will bear fruit richly, but if you are not one with the vine, then you are as a branch that is cut off and withereth.

And so I would like to tell you that as a human being you are a branch of a tree that is cut off from its source, and that is why you can have sin, disease, accident, death, false appetites, all of the horrors of human existence can happen to any human being, and they can happen at almost any time, and the reason is that a human being is not under the law of God, neither in deed can be. A human being is a branch of a tree walking around the earth not attached to the tree.

But, the Master goes on, if you are one with the vine, if you abide in this Word, then you bear fruit richly because just as a branch on the tree receives its blossoms, its leaves, its fruit by virtue of its connection with the tree, and the trunk of the tree with the roots, and the root with the ground, because these are all one, everything flows up and out into the branch and becomes fruitage.

Now you and I are exactly what the Master said, "I can of my own self do nothing. If I speak of myself I bear witness to a lie," and don't think that you or I are any better than Jesus, and he recognized his nothingness as a man Jesus. He recognized his nothingness; he recognized his incapacity to do anything.

Ah but, *the Father within me, He doeth the work*, and therefore, I am but the outlet, the instrument used by God. I of my own self am nothing. *The Father within me He doeth the works.*

Therefore, the Master was consciously one with God, and by virtue of that, the Godhead could work through him and perform the mighty works which have, of course, kept his name alive, and his deeds, and his message, and his mission, and really serves as an example that all of the world is rapidly coming to, but not because of Jesus, but because of Jesus' oneness with God, the Father.

Now, Paul tells us that as a creature you are not under the law of God, neither indeed can be, but if so the Spirit of God dwell in you, then do you become the children of God, and if children, then heirs, joint-heirs, *if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you*, if so be you have that Father within you that the Master told us of.

Now, as human beings, even though we have the Master within us, we have the Father within us, it is of no benefit to us because we have no conscious contact with It, and a contact, to be a contact, must be a conscious one.

If you had a million dollars in the bank but didn't know it, that million dollars could serve no purpose in your life. You might have a great big estate somewhere in California, but I can assure you that it will not benefit you until such time as you know you have the estate, in other

words, until you become consciously aware of it, and until you become consciously aware of the Father within you it is just the same as if you didn't have a Father within you.

If so be the Spirit of God dwell in you, then do you become the child of God, but the Spirit of God does dwell in you. It dwells in everybody, but if you are not consciously aware of It, it is of no value to you. Therefore, meditation is the way in which you establish conscious contact, conscious awareness of the Presence within.

Now in my experience I discovered this, and I discovered that it was through meditation that I became consciously aware of a Presence, and when I became consciously aware of a Presence, my life out here, that day, was more harmonious. Things went smoothly, everything moved in the way it should move with God governing it, but on those days when there was no such conscious contact I was back again as a human being and life was just according to luck, circumstance, chance or whatever might be.

After long periods, oh, way into the months, probably a year or so, of meditation that conscious contact was so well established that it became permanent, and then life out here began to be lived much in the way that Paul described—*I live, yet not I. Christ liveth my life.*

And so it was that after about a year of daily conscious meditations and contacts that all of a sudden it wasn't necessary to take thought what I shall eat, or what I shall drink. It wasn't necessary to take thought about what I should do. Everything was—you might say presented to me, or the way was made straight, mansions were prepared all by virtue of this contact.

Now, in teaching meditation to students I found it very, very difficult. The reason was that we, of the western world, are really taught to think continuously. Our lives are thought and action, thought and action. It makes no difference that a great deal of that thought is nonsensical thought, and unnecessary thought, nevertheless we have to be thinking something all the time or else, pick up something to read.

As a matter of fact it was discovered within this last quarter century that people aren't very good at reading, and so we developed this new type of literature—the picture press, picture newspapers, and picture magazines so that nobody has to read and think any more. You just look at a picture and there you see it.

Now, in one way or another then, our western mind is busy either with pictures, internal or external, or with thoughts, and rambling thoughts they might be too, so that when you try to settle down into meditation you find it well nigh impossible because the think box keeps going; the mind keeps active, and you just can't settle down into that peace.

And so, eventually, there revealed itself to me a way whereby we can settle down to peaceful meditation, and that begins with what in our book we have called “practicing the presence.” The title as you know comes from Brother Lawrence's work, but the idea of practicing the presence is slightly different with us than with him, and the purpose is different.

With us practicing the presence is a specific activity of the mind, and it is performed for a specific purpose.

Number One: To practice the presence of God means to acknowledge Him in all thy ways. It means keep the mind stayed on God, and He will give thee peace, and so it is that with us practicing the presence of God is an acknowledgement of God in all our ways.

For instance, on waking in the morning our first thought is the acknowledgement that God has brought the daylight after the night, that this day the creation of God is God's, and that in this day all that takes place is in the hand of God, that God *is* the life of this day, the law unto this day, the presence unto this day, and the power unto this day. And as we go to the breakfast table

we acknowledge that God has sent forth food into this world. It is God that placed the crops in the ground. It is God that placed the cattle on a thousand hills. It is God that is responsible for the sunshine, the rain, the snow, everything that produces food that eventually comes to our table.

As we leave home we pause before going through a doorway to realize consciously that God's presence goes before me to make the crooked places straight, that God will be the cement of our relationships with all those we meet throughout the day.

When we go to business, when to go to any task, it is with the realization: *He performeth that which is given me to do. He perfecteth that which concerneth me.* It's an acknowledgement that I can of my own self do nothing, but the Father within me is doing the works.

And at lunch time and at dinner time we are again acknowledging God, even to go for a glass of water is to acknowledge that this has been given to us by God's grace, and whatever benefit it has in our system must be part of God's grace, because man surely had nothing to do with the qualities of water, except recently to spoil it a bit.

Now, when we make a practice of this, when we keep our mind stayed on God in this way throughout the day and night, when we acknowledge God as the health of our countenance, as our safety and security, as our all, it is only a very few days can pass until you find within yourself an inner peace, at least more peace than before, and perhaps even a greater assurance, because by now you have acknowledged so often the reality of God in your human experience, the presence and power of God that comes back to you from within you. The assurance—you're right. I am with you. *I do go before you.*

You receive some kind of an assurance that stops a great deal of your anxious thought, concerned thought, worried thought, fearful thought, because now you are entertaining God consciously within you, and it is an impossibility to walk up and down the world with God consciously with us and fearing, or doubting, or hating, and so it is then that this practice of God gives us something of an inner peace.

Now when we sit down we will find that the mind is not as rambunctious as it was before. Now it is more subject unto us so that when we sit down and commence to contemplate God's grace, God's availability, God's presence, it only takes a very few moments of that contemplation until inwardly thought really quiets down—sometimes only for a couple of seconds, but that couple of seconds can be recaptured several times, and as you continue then in both practicing the presence and meditation, you will find that eventually this inner peace will remain with you for as much as a minute.

Of course it doesn't have to be a minute—one second is enough to transform anyone's life, but you do eventually come to the place where in your meditation, after you have had your few moments of contemplation, that there comes a momentary pause, an inner stillness, for a few seconds, or a minute, then you can get up and go about your work.

Now, it is for this reason that when you are introducing this subject to anyone that the first book to recommend to them to start out with is *Practicing the Presence*. The second book to start out with is *The Art of Meditation*, and after that, of course, they can follow any order that suits their own unfoldment. The main thing is that every individual live their lives in practicing the presence of God and in meditation.

Now, to live without the practice of the presence of God, to live without the continuous acknowledgement of God's love, God's grace, God's life, is really to live the life of the walking dead, because even life is only death when it's separated from God.

As you will find, and as some of you have already found that once you are consciously living with God, once you have brought God into conscious living with you, so that your mind is stayed on God, you will find that a whole new dimension of life opens to you. It will never again be a life separate and apart from God. It never again will be the branch of a tree that is cut off and withereth. You are a branch of a tree that is cut off and withereth unless you have God consciously in your consciousness.

When you have God consciously in your consciousness you have the Spirit of God dwelling in you and you are a child of God. When you have the truth of God's love, God's life, God's omnipresence, God's omnipotence, God's omniscience, when you have that dwelling in your consciousness continuously, you are dwelling in God continuously, and those who dwell in God, none of these evils of the world shall come nigh thy dwelling place.

But you must remember that your consciousness is the connecting link between you and God, and God absent from your consciousness makes of you a branch of a tree that is cut off, but your consciousness imbued with God, your consciousness filled with God has the indwelling Presence, has the Spirit of God dwelling in you, constitutes the Spirit of God dwelling in you, and now you are consciously living in God.

Then when you sit down to your meditations you will find that it does not take you long to have an inner response, and this inner response means—it's really a signal; it's a signal announcing God's presence.

Now this is the point that above all others that I would like you to carry with you because it really is the capstone of this week's work—and this is literal truth that I'm going to speak to you, this is not symbolic, and this is not poetry. This is a fact.

You do not need money for anything. You do not need food, and you do not need clothing, and you do not need transportation, and you do not need companionship, and you do not need a home, and you can instantly stop taking thought for any of those things. When, in your meditation, you feel this inner response, this "something" that lets you know that God is on the field, you have attained your entire goal of life. After that you have nothing left to seek, to work for, to strive for, or to think about.

The reason is this—the presence of God, consciously realized, *is* your bread, your meat, your wine, your water, your dwelling place, your safety, and your security.

Once you have the consciousness of the presence of God you never need concern yourself about any other proposition in life. Everything is added unto you. Everything is performed for you. Everything is done for you.

You—well I've quoted to you Saroyan's statement, "I don't feel that I'm living my life; God is living my life and I just go along for the ride," and this is about as well as it can be explained except in Paul's language, *I live, yet not I; Christ liveth my life*.

There is a complete relaxing from effort. Don't misunderstand, it's not a complete relaxing from work. I'm afraid that once you have the conscious awareness of the presence of God you'll have to do as the rest of us do. You'll have to work double hours. There's too much given us to do to accomplish it in one eight hour day, so most of those who attain this usually work sixteen hour days.

You will never be short of work; so don't think that this means that when you acquire God you just have nothing to do but look at the landscape. You have work to do but you have no anxious thought.

You have no possibility of failure. You have no possibility of lack or limitation in the field of economics, regardless of what may be happening out in the world. You'll have no lack of companionships at every level of your life where companionships are needed, whether it is a partner in business, or a partner in the home. You will have companionships at every level necessary to your experience. You'll have home, and comfort but you will not take thought for them for there will be no need. There never is a need for taking thought for anything that concerns this life once this contact is established and maintained.

It is necessary everyday to consciously re-establish that contact as if somehow it had gotten broken. It hasn't, but the mesmerism of the world is very apt to interfere with its operation in your experience unless you continuously renew it.

And don't think that the Master with his highly developed or evolved consciousness didn't have to go away once in a while for forty days to refresh himself. Don't think he didn't have to go away probably every night for an hour or two to refresh himself by conscious communion with God.

Now, I suppose many of you have had the experience of communion in church. I don't know anything about that, but I can tell you something about communion with God. There is That within us which we may call the presence of God, or the Spirit of God, or the indwelling Christ. We can call it the presence of God. We can call It the Father within, if it means that to us, or if we're like Father Abraham, we could call It "Friend."

Regardless of what name you would like to call It, there is an actual Presence with which we can commune, with which we can be in constant communion, and it is after we have succeeded in meditation in receiving this response from within, this release, or this feeling that God is on the field, that by persisting in meditation we come eventually to that place of communion where there is an actual flow—let us say that it is going from me to this God within, and coming back to me from this God within so that it is like a circular motion.

It is very much like what takes place in a classroom. When I am sitting up here I am feeling an actual flow, an actual Spirit almost, that is going out from me to you, and I can feel it coming back from you to me, and especially after the first night when we're really in tune with God, and with each other, it is very marked, and that's why I don't want people coming into the room except those who have been here from the start, because by now, after that first night there is a rhythm going back and forth between us.

It's a rhythm of love; it's a rhythm of understanding; it's a rhythm of the God nature. It's really the Spirit of God, which is a Spirit of Truth, or a Spirit of understanding, and that rhythm is really a life long relationship to those who have once felt it. It binds us together—not with any human ties. Thank God we've learned that we can be bound together without any human ties or obligations.

We are bound together by an invisible spiritual bond of understanding, which is the Spirit of God that moves in us, and through us, and between us.

Now, there is this same flow within in the communion with God. It has been called "love," and of course, no one understands what that word "love" means, and I'm sure that there wouldn't be much use of trying to investigate to find out. I certainly haven't. I only know the name—"love". I know the feeling, and I know it's as if I could say, "I love God," but not in the sense that we humanly speak of loving God. Do you love God? Oh yes. Do you believe in God? Oh yes. I don't mean anything like that.

I mean an actual emotion—not emotion, sentiment, feeling—that can only be expressed by the word “love,” and I feel that same love flowing to me from that Center, and yet nothing of a personal nature—just the fact that there is this quiet, inner communion whose essence is love.

Now, with that you can well understand that it would folly for me to be worried about anything, because if that Presence has any function there at all, it must be exactly what Jesus Christ revealed. What was his mission on earth? To heal the sick—really he said to do the works of his Father.

*This doctrine is not mine but His that sent me*, and he was sent to heal the sick, to raise the dead, feed the hungry, preach the gospel, and therefore, if I have the presence of God in me, which really we speak of as the Christ, the Spirit of God, then I have that within me which is put there for the specific purpose of healing me if I’m ill, forgiving me if I sin, feeding me if I’m hungry, instructing me when I need wisdom.

Its purpose then is to fulfill God in me. *In Thy presence is fulfillment*, and so when that presence of God is consciously with me Its function is to fulfill Itself in my experience.

Now, it never does this for my sake. It never does this for your sake. It does this only to the glory of God, to show forth what God is, how God functions, to show forth God’s glory. Just as the heavens declare the glory of God, and the earth showeth forth His handiwork, so do we show forth God’s glory when we are consciously one with God.

Having the presence of God with us does not make us great. As the Master indicated it does not make one a master. It makes one a servant. Someone else may call him master, but within himself he knows that that’s not true. He is not a master; he is a servant.

His function on earth isn’t to dominate anybody or anything, but to serve mankind in the showing forth of God’s glory, and therefore, as this Spirit of God takes over in our experience, It gives us work to do, believe me, plenty of work to do, plenty of responsibilities, but never worries, for the simple reason that we know that we are messengers going out, performing that which is given us to do by virtue of the fact that He is really performing it through us.

So it is. It makes no difference whether you are a painter, or a sculptor, or a businessman, or an attorney. When you have established this contact you are better at whatever your work is than you ever could have been before, but you are better not because you are greater, but because you are humbler, because you have let the Spirit of God take over and perform Its work through you.

You never become indispensable. On the contrary, you realize more and more that no individual is any more indispensable than a rose on a rose bush. As you empty one rose bush you’ll find more roses growing on there, and you’ll find that as we retire from the active scene more like us will appear to do our work, and to do it better, because with each succeeding generation there is a greater spiritual impulse coming through to us.

So it is that first by virtue of consciously—which means even mentally realizing God’s presence and God’s power, and God’s government, God’s jurisdiction, God’s grace—you bring about an inner quietness and stillness.

That inner quietness and stillness enables you to meditate and receive the conscious awareness of God’s presence. Remember it was there all of the time. Remember that God’s presence is on the gallows with the man being hung. Remember that God’s presence is in every automobile accident.

The only reason these fatalities can happen is that the presence of God is not consciously realized, for where the Spirit of God *is* there is liberty; there is freedom from sin, and disease, and accident, and fear, and poverty. So that, God is omnipresent, but it takes the conscious

awareness of The presence of God. It takes the consciousness of the presence of God to bring God into your manifest experience.

In other words, the Word is always the Word, but the Word must become flesh. The Word, the Invisible Spirit, must become tangible health, happiness and holiness and abundance, and the way where unto it is accomplished is the way of meditation in which the realized presence of God can take place. The presence of God is there. There must be a realized presence of God.

So when you sit down to pray, when you sit down to meditate or treat, remember it isn't the words or thoughts that you use in your prayer or treatment that constitutes power. The words and thoughts you use are meant only to settle you down into an inner peace and quiet so that there can be a conscious realization of God's presence.

It is this God presence consciously realized that performs the healing works, and any practitioner who has ever done successful healing work will tell you that the healings only take place when they have realized God on the scene; when they have either treated or meditated until an inner release has taken place—release from fear, release from concern, release from worry, release from doubt, and an assurance takes its place. An assurance that seems to say, "Fear not, I am with you. *I am on the scene. Fear not, I go before you.*"

Whatever it is, whatever assurance it is that brings release to you within is bringing healing to the one for whom you are praying or treating, but that release must be there.

That is why there are far too many practitioners who know how to give a treatment and yet do not heal. That is because they believe that their treatment does the healing work, and that is not true.

It is the consciously realized presence of God that does the healing work, and the only purpose of the treatment, or the prayer, or the meditation is to so elevate you in consciousness that you can be still long enough, "Speak Lord, thy servant heareth," and then wait for that peace to descend upon you, or that assurance to be given you. Then you will know that your treatment is proving effective.

Now, in the beginning of your experience you may have to spend twenty or thirty or forty or fifty minutes or an hour with every treatment before you attain that conscious awareness that results in healing. But as you continue in your healing work, you will find that gradually your treatments will take less minutes, until the time will come when most of them will take less than a minute.

Oh, in between will be some that will take days, weeks, and months, but by far the majority will be quickly given, but that is only because you have reached a place in your unfoldment when you are living consciously in God throughout the day and the night. That is, when you don't have to fall out of God, and then work yourself back in; when you don't have to feel that the turmoil of the world has separated you from God, and you have to go through long meditations to bring yourself back to the presence of God.

The time eventually comes when you are living, you might say, three-quarters of your life in God, and consciously aware of God, and therefore, to get back into the Spirit takes only a minute or two, not that you're ever out of it completely, but that you are just far enough out so that you need a minute or two for re-establishing that realization of the Presence.

And of course, if you go as far as Paul did you might get to the place where you can say now, I'm not living my life at all. I'm in this world but not of it at all. The Christ is continuously living my life. The Christ is continuously before me making the crooked places straight. The

Christ is continuously beside me as protection. The Christ is eternally with me *as* my food and clothing and lodging and housing and transportation.

In other words, you have then come to the peak of the mystical life, and that peak is when you are abiding consciously in the realization of God. Then, after that, there never is occasion for any kind of worry, fear, doubt, concern.

There are aggravations of course. There are minor things that come up in life of a disturbing nature, but there are no major problems—not even death; because should the time approach you for a transition into another experience, you will no longer call it death, nor will you think of it as something to be avoided.

You will know by then that neither life nor death can separate you from life, for the only life there is is God, and you cannot be separated from God, and so no question arises now as to whether death is a lack of demonstration or not. It is not a death, and it is not a lack of demonstration. It is that natural transition which everyone makes from one state of consciousness to another as they are prepared for the experience.

The peak of this is that when you have the feeling of the presence of God, when you have this inner assurance you have everything in the external world of which you can have any possible need. In other words, once you have this Presence you don't have to think of turning It into food, or turning It into opportunity, or turning It into the sale of property. Once you have this feeling of the Presence your demonstration of life is complete.

You, from then on, only have to live in It, abide in It, let It abide in you, and you will be one with the tree, one with roots, one with the ground. You'll be one with God, and in being one with God you will be one with every person necessary to your experience, and you will be one with every thing necessary to your experience. You will be one with every dollar necessary to your experience.

Why? Because God *is* supply. God *is* the health of thy countenance. God *is* safety and security. God *is* peace. There is no God giving these. There is no God supplying these. God *is* these, and when you have the realization of God, you have all the "these."

Now, there is no higher attainment in heaven or on earth than the realized presence of God, because abiding in that realized presence of God you will find God to be the substance of all form. God will be the substance of your entire experience.

Keep in mind that to be consciously one with God is to bear fruit richly, because you are one with the Source. You are one with the ground. You are grounded in the ground and everything is flowing forth from the infinity into and through you infinitely—eternally.

To live unaware of God is to be the walking dead.

Thank you.