

Foundations of Unity

Lesson 14

Unity of the Spirit

It is a living reality that behind the multitude of human endeavors to bring about the new age, the millennium, there stands forever what we call the Master Mind, which sees the end from the beginning. This Mind is the Master Artist who designed us all — a touch of one color here, a different hue there — but always one indwelling Spirit in all created things. It is almost pitiful and at times utterly ridiculous to see the mind of man trying to limit God to our own individual personal comprehension. So often we take the view that we already know all there is to know of God. And yet there are always unexplored realms of expression, no matter how far we have come in our spiritual understanding.

The Wall

Emilie Cady, a physician, writing before the 20th century, delved into mental and spiritual science perhaps 100 years ahead of her time. In one of her books, she asks the reader to visualize a giant wall containing holes or openings of varying sizes, from the tiniest pinhole to one the size of, perhaps, a door. Before each opening or hole in the wall are people. Viewing the world beyond the wall from the individual openings, each person's perception of the world will differ. One person may see only fields and trees. Viewing through a larger hole, the next person may see fields, trees, and houses. And the next may see the same fields, trees, and houses, but also clouds, the sky, people, wagons, animals. And, of course, as the openings increase in size, the viewer is able to see more and more, until finally, from the widest opening, the world for miles around can be seen. Each person views the same world but perceives the world according to the size of the aperture through which he is looking. And each person limits the world to his own circumscribed view of it.

It is obvious that such limited views of the world are only the mark of our own ignorance or narrow-mindedness. Yet so many times, we feel that our own concept of God is all there is. And in the field of religion and religious experience, the result of such limited views has been to create schisms and divisions between religious sects and denominations. Whether Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, and Moslem — each says that the "hole" through which they view the world is correct and presents the only true picture.

In this lesson, the word "unity" goes beyond the organizational meaning to a more universal sense. The "Unity" label is merely that — a small label on a larger unity of Spirit that lives in and through all people, everywhere, regardless of the size of the aperture through which they view the world. No matter their dimension of the world — it is the same Source and the same Spirit present in every created thing.

A Theology of Freedom

We must lose sight of the myriad of differences that exist between us, lose sight of the lesser, trivial things, and see only one thing — the consciousness of the presence of the indwelling God — within us, in our lives, in all our relationships. In a wheel, there is less and less separation between the spokes toward the center. And so as we go toward the center of our being, toward this unity of Spirit, there is less and less separation of humanity, whether it is in religion, politics, sociology, or psychology.

In the new age that is developing, it is very important that we develop a new theology, a freeing theology, rather than one that is binding and closed and narrow. We must move away from thinking that decrees, "My way is the only way; this is the only way to approach God." It is too dangerous for humanity to proceed with this primitive thinking.

Everyone's idea of God is true for them at that particular point in time. That is the best they can do with the perspective they have at that time! But for those of us who are Truth students, who have entered a new realm of thinking, there is no excuse. We must enlarge the

aperture through which we look at the world — including, rather than excluding, other people for trivial reasons of disagreement with their ideas.

There are many forms of absolutism in the world today. The faith healer, for example, says, "If you pray and knock on God's door, and importune, God will wonderfully heal you!" All healing is Divine, and prayer is important, but the faith healer says we must beg God, the Unchangeable, to act. Another, involved in Religious Science, says we must heal with the spoken word. This may be true; we tune ourselves by the spoken word. The mental scientist does not agree with either; he says that "All is Mind; all is Unchangeable Law." We are faced with extremism on many sides; many people believe their way to be the only way. And such narrow views are what create the separation between us.

We must remember, as surely as we live, that it is all one and the same Truth. There may be distinctions, but there is no difference in the Source who made us all. Whether Methodist, Baptist, Catholic, Buddhist, or Moslem, our Source is the same. As metaphysicians, we — with all our intellectualism — may sometimes become condescending toward others whose belief systems differ from ours. This is a narrow view. We have the capacity to look through a larger hole in the wall — therefore we also have the responsibility to be tolerant, rather than critical because someone's view of the world happens to be smaller than our own.

The theology of freedom involves unity of Spirit. Each person is on a spiritual journey by himself. It is not our responsibility to criticize; it is only our responsibility as Truth students to help set the example, so that others can also be free. Freedom carries responsibility; it is not a license to do what we wish, heedless of the harm it may bring others. Freedom gives us the power to express ourselves in the finest and best way we know, with the idea that, by virtue of what we are, we are sharing with others the truth that there is a unity of Spirit that permeates the entire universe. No matter how small or how great, it is still the same Truth.

Developing a "Single Eye"

Emilie Cady tells the story of a woman who was attending a very orthodox prayer meeting. The woman knew nothing of Unity or metaphysical principles, and she was not well versed in the latest theology. However, her face was radiant with the light of Christ manifesting through her. She just glowed! In that prayer meeting, the woman told the story of how, that five or six years in the past, she had earnestly tried to know more of God. She did not read spiritual books or talk to clergy; she had only herself. She would pray to "Something" she felt within her, asking that some special word or message might be given to her to make her understand. Suddenly these words flashed into her mind, from the book of Matthew: "If, therefore, thine eye be single, thy body shall be full of light. No man can serve two masters." She had read these words many times, but that day, they were illumined by Spirit, and she saw and understood that to have a single eye meant seeing only One Power in her life — rather than seeing two powers, that of God and the Devil, or Good and Evil.

After her experience of illumination, she had many trials and tribulations in her life. But she always, intuitively, returned to that God-Oneness within. She would have nothing to do with evil, nothing to do with the Devil. She would center herself only on God, the Good, and Omnipotent, knowing no metaphysical teachings or any laws of mind action. She actually overcame the tribulations of her life by developing a single eye. In one day, by the infinite Spirit, she had been taught the whole secret of how to banish evil and have only good and joy in our lives. Isn't that simple?

Developing Tolerance

We can go right to the center. We already know that at the center of our being, all is One, the same God forevermore. If a person in a primitive culture has a golden calf as his highest conception of God, so be it! That person's mind has not yet expanded to the state where any but a visible form can be grasped as an idea of God. A great proportion of the world's population living today still sees God as a living form of one kind or another. Their belief is valid for them.

We see God manifest in living forms also — in people, trees, flowers, animals, in the visible and invisible, in different ways, and to different degrees. Would it not be arrogant of us to assume that ours is the only way? To put down another person because the aperture through which they view the world is only one inch square? Would it not be better to do the loving thing, the kind thing — to see Christ in that person, to see within them an inner light that will act to open their vision to a wider world? That is our responsibility.

Often, when we find a new truth, the first thing we want to do is to rush out and tell others about it. We want to "convert" others to our own way of thinking, to our own new illumination. And sharing is natural. But we must beware of trying to force others to view the world and God as we do, as the only way.

Why are there so many evangelists in the world today? Why so many missionaries traveling to the ends of the earth to "save" people? No one is lost! How can we "save" people who are not lost? The clergy is arrogant in saying; "I know God — but the only way that you can know God is through me, and the ideas I speak."

You may be a fundamentalist, one who says, "Jesus is my personal Savior." Wonderful! If Jesus is your personal Savior, and you are radiating that same kind of light — the Christ light, the Father-Mother God — through you, then wonderful! We will not argue with you. Yet if you as a fundamentalist require that I use the same terminology and hold the same ideas as you do, then you are not giving me the freedom to be what I am. As Truth students, involved in metaphysical study, we would hope that our view of the world is a bit larger. Yet you, as a Catholic, Jew, Buddhist, fundamentalist, or whatever you may be, have the right to view the world and approach God according to your own perceptions.

The greatest help that we can give any other person is to tell him silently, whenever we think of him, "The Holy Spirit [Christ, God, Source] lives within you. He cares for you and is working within you so that you can do what you must do in your life, by manifesting Him." Then, we let that person be; we release him and let him go. In other words, we see the highest and best, the Christ Spirit, moving through him and through our own selves. We

are not converting him to our own way of thinking, but rather, allowing him to be what he is. When we release that person to his own Divine Spirit, which is going to operate no matter what we think, then he will be in the right place, at the right time, doing what he ought to be doing.

This kind of tolerance gives us freedom. We no longer feel the need to go around the world, converting everyone to our way of thinking; we can get on with becoming what we ourselves should be — loving, wonderful, expressing persons. And it would eliminate the idea of separation — the idea of absolutism.

The Unifying Idea of a Father-Mother God

Many times, Unity uses the term "Father-Mother God." What does this mean? The "Father" represents the Unchangeable Law, which God is. God does not set aside any of His laws for any of us; they work inexorably. This appears as a rather cold and unyielding principle. However, there is also a Presence, an Essence, within us — the immanence of God, a mothering influence — and this is the "Mother" concept. Our concept of God is one - - Father-Mother-God. It is an all-encompassing concept. We turn away from our own efforts and turn within — we have a "single eye" directed only toward God, the Source within us.

There is a unity of Spirit moving through us from this Father-Mother God. No longer need we criticize others; we can live our own lives in such a wonderful way that we set the example, to help others see our light and then expand their own. As we open ourselves to the Presence within us, we recognize that there is no separation between the Fatherhood and the Motherhood of God, and no separation between us as human beings. One God, one Source, one people.

MEDITATION:

"There is a Spirit in man — the Spirit of the Almighty." Each of us is a child of the Most High, able to attain all the good we desire, and to be all that we want to be. There is a Spirit in man — a Spirit of the Almighty — making us capable, loving, joyous, enthusiastic, and successful. No matter how great our need, we attune our thoughts to the Wisdom within — God's Wisdom, and find right answers. With God's help, we make wise decisions that bring good and positive results. From the Source within, we find peace, poise, health, wholeness, and every good thing. We are of the Spirit, and this Spirit helps us to see beyond appearances to the good in all persons and in every situation and circumstance. God's Spirit within helps us to go about our everyday activities with a positive, harmonious attitude, and with love in our hearts.