

The Silence

E.V. Ingraham

ENLARGED EDITION

UNITY SCHOOL OF CHRISTIANITY
LEE'S SUMMIT, MO.
1965

The Silence by E.V. Ingraham

Reprint formatted by:

Truth Unity

www.truthunity.net

wiki.truthunity.net

mark@truthunity.net

Contents

Forward	1
The Silence	3
What the Silence Really Is	17
Beyond the Silence	27
The Practice of the Silence	37

Forward

This little book is presented to the student as a textbook covering the principles and practices of the silence. The endeavor is to make clear the various points involved in the practice of the silence, and to render the benefits of that practice clear to every student.

Inasmuch as the silence is fundamentally for the purpose of bringing man into an understanding relationship with God, it is a form of prayer. Nor is it a new form of prayer, for it is in strict accord with Bible teachings, such as, "Be still, and know," and "Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret."

By stating that the silence is a form of prayer, we do not mean to imply that it is the only form of prayer. It is, however, one of the most vital phases of prayer, and through a right understanding and application of it man will find the silence a strong factor in bringing himself to a realization of the good for which he has long sought in vain.

The effectiveness of prayer does not depend on the form followed, but on the spirit involved. The monotonous beat of the Indian medicine man upon his tomtom, as an appeal to the Great Spirit, has worked relatively as many miracles for the red man as has the well-thought-out and scientific prayer of the modern metaphysician. If one discerns the purpose of the form, and receives the thing for which it was designed, that is well; but if through following the form one loses sight of its purpose, it were better that the form did not exist.

Henry "Ward Beecher said: "A man has a right to go to God by any way which is true to him. If you can think it out, that is your privilege. If you can feel it out, that is your privilege. One thing is certain: The child has a right to nestle in his father's bosom, whether he climb there upon his knee or by the chair by the side of him; any way, so that it is his father. Wherever you have seen God pass, mark it, and go and sit in that

window again." It is in that spirit that we present these lessons. By the method that we shall outline here, others have come into a closer realization of the power and presence of God, and we sincerely trust that you, in following these suggestions, also may receive the blessing of a closer communion with our Father.

If you have the belief that the silence is mysterious or difficult, just forget your experience for a time. Let us study together the simple means by which we may commune with God and the ways by which we may most effectively appropriate the blessings that He has had for us since the beginning of time.

From the points outlined in the following pages, take only those that seem to meet your need at the time; practice them until they have yielded their results in your consciousness, in your body, and in your affairs. Then pass on to the next idea that offers the possibility of linking your own soul with the great Oversoul in a closer bond of unity and communion.

The Silence

In this changing world it is necessary for man, if he would stabilize his life, to have some dependable foundation upon which to build his life's structure and from which to evolve his ideals. Experience has taught him that this stable foundation is not to be found in the visible world, for, as Paul says, "What is seen hath not been made out of things which appear." Indeed, "God is Spirit," and the things of God are "spiritually discerned." It is therefore our purpose to bring into practical use in life the practice called "the silence," for through its exercise the theory that God is omnipresent may become a vital realization.

The silence is not in any sense the discovery of a new process of mind, but is a practice known very well to every genius, every inventor, every philosopher, and in fact every individual who has in any degree outstripped his fellow men and brought back to the world some new idea or invention from beyond the range of habitual thought and experience. The silence is clearly taught in the Scriptures, and is one of the most vital aspects of prayer. "Be still, and know" is a clear command to let the mind rest from its own activities and record knowledge that the Infinite waits to reveal.

Longfellow caught the vital nature of this form of prayer when he wrote the following:

Let us, then, labor for an inward stillness—
An inward stillness and an inward healing;
That perfect silence where the lips and heart
Are still, and we no longer entertain
Our own imperfect thoughts and vain opinions,
But God alone speaks in us, and we wait
In singleness of heart, that we may know
His will, and in silence of our spirits,
That we may do His will, and do that only.

To gain new knowledge, man must be willing to leave his former ideas behind. No mind is capable of receiving instruction from any source when it is preoccupied with other ideas. We therefore suggest that you approach the practice of the silence in the spirit set forth in the following verse by Ella Wheeler Wilcox:

Let there be many windows in your soul,
That all the glories of the universe
May beautify it. Not the narrow pane
Of one poor creed can catch the radiant rays
That shine from countless sources. Tear away
The blinds of superstition; let the light
Pour through fair windows, broad as Truth itself,
And high as heaven.

Purpose

Shakespeare said, "All the graces of mind and heart slip through the grasp of an infirm purpose."

Much of the difficulty experienced in connection with the silence is due to the fact that many people have no clearly defined purpose in view. These people try to get still, to stop the turbulent activity of their minds, to put ideas out of consciousness, or to go through various other processes that are wholly negative. Others merely give their time to holding specific thoughts, affirmations, and the like. Each of these methods has its rightful place, but there is a purpose above and beyond them all, and in attaining this higher purpose, these negative phases of the silence take care of themselves. The fundamental purpose of the silence is to establish a means of conscious communion between God and man. It is literally seeking first "his kingdom, and his righteousness," knowing that in the discovery of the kingdom itself the lesser objectives are attained. If this purpose is understood as the objective and is strictly adhered to, the greatest possible benefit will be derived from the practice that we are considering in these pages. On going into the silence, a person should remember that he is going into the presence of God. He should go into this presence in an expectant attitude, knowing that he is to receive, and therefore should be in a receptive mood. It is foolish for one to go to a spring for a bucket of water, without a bucket in which to receive the waters thereof. Likewise a person going into the presence of God should be as an empty

vessel into which may be received in full measure all the elements of that divine presence.

The following paragraphs deal with attitudes of mind and body. While the suggestions given are helpful, remember that they are not arbitrary rules, nor are the methods suggested to be considered as ends in themselves. They are only the grooming of oneself for a race, and the race itself is the important thing. However, the first step that we shall consider is fundamentally important, for it deals with the basic principle of the silence itself and the fundamental purpose of this booklet.

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

The ancient philosophers voiced this Scriptural statement in the idea that "only the single-eyed succeed." To some degree we understand the application of this principle in everyday life, for we recognize the fact that if a musician is to succeed he must devote himself to his music. If a student is to become a mathematician, he must devote himself to mathematics. The businessman must devote himself to his business. Irrelevant thinking, irregular practices, conditions foreign or opposed to our undertakings must delay our progress and defeat our purpose to the very degree to which they occupy our attention. Complete devotion to a single purpose is the secret of true and quick success. For this reason we set forth one idea as basically important in the schooling of the mind of the individual who would enter the path of the silence. This idea is that "there is but one presence and one power in the universe, the presence and power of God, the good omnipotent." The student should spend days, weeks, months, yes, even years, in schooling his mind to this realization and in training his feelings to respond to this all-important premise, which is to become the basis of all his future calculations. This is the foundation upon which his spiritual consciousness is to be built, and by which the integrity of his spiritual nature is to be preserved. It is the very essence of the foundation upon which Christ built His life and the only power to which He yielded homage. It is therefore the foundation upon which we may build the Christ Mind in ourselves.

To deny the one Presence and one Power, or to proclaim a power opposed to it, is to deny the very nature of God, who is described in the Scriptures as omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. Paul's realization of the omnipotence of God is described in the 8th chapter of Romans: "If God is for us, who is against us?" And again, "For I

am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor heights, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." The fact that "in him we live, and move, and have our being" is not sufficient. It is our contemplating and studying this fact to the point where it becomes a living reality in our consciousness that is the important thing. To be true to the fact that there is but one Presence and one Power is to be possessed of the key to a correct solution of all life's problems. To the degree in which we recognize other powers, we fall short of even the possibility of a correct answer. This might be well illustrated in mathematics. The basis of all mathematical calculation is the unit, or 1. If in any of our figuring we assume that 1 is ever more or less than 1, our answer is incorrect. We must be true to this basic fact in mathematics, for in being true to it is the secret of successful computation. The rule "The Lord our God is one Lord" is just as important in calculating life's problems. It may not always seem easy, in facing life, to recognize that there is nothing but God, for we have trained ourselves to believe in much that to us is not godly. But let us not try to explain as God that which we do not understand. Let us just remember that back of all creation, no matter what its appearance, there is always the moving Spirit of God, sometimes mysteriously hidden from us but always working to fulfill the perfection of Being itself.

The Silence Not Negative

The silence is not a negative or an inert state of the mind. Many persons, not realizing this, have allowed their minds to become inert, and through this false conception of the silence they have lessened their executive ability to no small degree. These persons, when attempting to practice the silence, often fall asleep. Can you not see how utterly ridiculous this is, to say the least? One would hardly say that this is respectful of the presence of Divinity. Think for a moment what the condition of your mind would be should you have the privilege of being ushered into the presence of Jesus. Think, if you will, of the condition of Moses' mind when in the presence of the burning bush he heard the command "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Can you picture anything but the most perfect attention, the most absolutely awake and alert mind, the most profound interest? Of course not, and yet when we enter the silence we are approaching this same presence.

Before you enter the silence it is well to take into account the fact that you are approaching the presence of Divinity, that you are entering into the presence of all the power, wisdom, majesty, love, and healing radiance that you have ever attributed to the historical Jesus, or to the God of the universe. Did not Jesus say, "Lo, I am with you always," and is not the highest report of God that which declares Him a being who is "Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all"? In this connection it might also be helpful to ponder long upon David's marvelous conception of the immanence of God, in the 139th Psalm, which is often quoted:

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there shall thy hand lead me,
And thy right hand shall hold me.

After reading this lesson, one should be thoroughly alive and awake with a divine enthusiasm. Approaching the silence in this attitude of mind one would be alert with vital attention, lest something of the divine nature escape one's notice. When a person's interest in God lifts him above the activities of his own personal thought, to the borderland of the Infinite, he has truly found the silence.

Relaxation

In the practice of the silence many persons have moments when they seem to touch the presence of God, but for some reason, which they cannot then explain, they are unable to retain their realization. Much of this difficulty is due to either mental strenuousness or physical tenseness. This state of mind and body is very often the direct cause of extreme emotional conditions. These conditions are usually very successfully met by cultivating a calm state of mind and a relaxed condition of body. It is said, "You cannot pour into a vessel already full." This is true of the individual whose mind and body are already preoccupied with some tense or strenuous state of mind or feeling.

The Scriptures say, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." By your developing a consciousness of the presence of God as the point of dependence for yourself, for your ideas, and for all the affairs of your life, the burden of self-direction is lifted from your own personal self. This frees both the mind and the body. This general thought would be especially helpful in attaining such an attitude: *"Into the care and keeping of God I give myself, all my ideas, all the affairs of my life, and all the people in whom I am concerned or who are concerned in me."* "I rest from my labors, that I may do the works of Him that sent me." Then be still that you may learn what work He would have you do. If you seem not to know what to do, do the next thing before you, as if you were doing it for God.

Much can be accomplished in the way of bodily relaxation by quietly telling the body to relax, to let go, to cease from its struggle; for the things of God are not accomplished by might or by power, but by His Spirit. The true function of both mind and body is service to Spirit. They are vehicles through which God expresses Himself in the world of affairs. This was the secret of Jesus' great power; we may attain to that same power by employing the same method. "The words that I say unto you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in me doeth his works." Relaxation is not lapsing into a state of inertia, nor is it sinking into physical negation. True relaxation, as we refer to it in this connection, is a complete surrender to the presence and power of Spirit. It is not a surrender to a tired or worn-out feeling, but a complete giving up to God. Relaxation is the state of complete mental and physical freedom—freedom from the limitations of the mind and flesh, and realization of the infinite power and presence of God actively expressing itself through every department of your being. Truly there could be no burden to mind or body in such an attitude, and relaxation would come naturally.

In contemplating the fact that it is the Father-Mind working through man that accomplishes all things that man does, and as the realization of this fact begins to be felt, one instinctively begins to relax and to let go of the mental and physical tension in which one is accustomed to live and work. This is part of the receiving process by which we appropriate the gifts of Spirit and incorporate them into our being. Nothing ever becomes ours until we accept it, because acceptance is the first requisite to ownership. Any amount of wealth may be yours potentially, but until you lay hold of it you do not possess it for any practical purpose.

Physical relaxation is not inertia. It is a state of absolute physical freedom. It is that state in which the body cells are free from the consciousness of strife and strenuous effort, and are perfectly responsive to Spirit.

Tendency to Sleep

Many persons, in their attempts to practice the silence, have great difficulty in overcoming the tendency to go to sleep. This tendency arises from two general causes. The first is that the individual needs a greater realization of physical vitality. Sleep is a process of revitalization of the body, and in sleep the same thing happens to the individual that happens to the storage battery when it is being recharged. The energies projected during the day reverse their direction and are reabsorbed by the body. If you have a tendency to get sleepy during your periods of silence, try preceding the period with a strong realization of the quickening power of God's perfect life as it fills every fiber of your being.

The second reason for this tendency to sleep is lack of genuine interest. Have you not at some time been deeply interested in reading a book of fiction? During the reading of that book you did not get sleepy. You found difficulty in going to sleep once you felt it your duty to lay the book down. Undoubtedly your mind was thoroughly interested in and awake to the action of the story. When you become as much interested in what God has to reveal to you as you are in your storybook, you will have no further difficulty in that direction.

Attention

Difficulty sometimes arises in the control of the mind because one does not realize the basis from which all mental action evolves. For instance, one strives through various methods to control the course of thought and feeling, whereas the basis of all mental control is in the point of mental focus, which we might call attention—the eye of the mind or the vision of the mind. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." Where the vision is centered the thoughts forgather, and the character of the thought is determined by the object on which the attention rests.

The necessity for one-pointedness is easily discerned by anyone who knows the laws of mind. To make the discovery of underlying Truth the supreme objective is to lay the foundation for the greatest possible attainment.

To contemplate the fact that God is the one presence and one power is all that an individual needs to do in order actually to begin his spiritual progress. Gradually, from that center of attention, the revelation of the actual facts of that presence will begin to draw on his waiting consciousness.

The matter of centering the attention on an invisible force is not a difficult thing. Just sit quietly for a moment and give your attention to the air. You cannot see it, hear it, smell it, taste it, or feel it though you may have heard and felt its action. Likewise you can contemplate the fact that there is an electrical ether, finer than the air, existing in you, through you, and around you, just as the air is. Transcending the electrical ether is the spiritual ether, the very essence of everything that has being, and it is from this spiritual ether that every lesser force or thing emanates. Contemplation of the fact of its presence is just as easy as contemplation of the fact of the presence of the air. It is impossible to hold the attention of the mind on nothing. But when you realize that Spirit is a presence, a reality as the air and electricity are realities, yet infinitely finer than these, infinitely more important, it is but a slight task for the mind to comprehend its existence.

Meditation

Attention is only the beginning of one's mental evolution in relation to this most important fact in life. The spiritual ether is not only omnipresent, "over all, and through all, and in all," but it contains all life, all substance, all power, all love, and in fact all that has being, for it is infinite. The mind therefore should be allowed to expand in its concepts of this one Presence and one Power. The mind should go on to speculate, as it were, on the character of the spiritual ether, on what it contains, how it moves, and what it conveys to the mind of man as it moves in and through his being. This mental speculation, this allowing the mind to expand in its estimate of the nature of the one Presence and one Power, is what we might call meditation.

True meditation consists in allowing the mind to make unlimited flights of speculation regarding the nature of the Mind of God, the power of this Mind, the love of this Mind, the wisdom contained in this Mind, the substance that comes from this Mind and out of which all things are formed, the instant availability of all the elements of this Mind to the individual who is open and receptive to it, and so on until man becomes conscious of the presence of God as he is now conscious of the presence of warmth, of light, or of any other element with which he is familiar. Meditation is a process of association with the divine presence, a method of forming an acquaintance with it.

The student can see how much this method differs from the false notion that the silence consists in simply making the mind a blank and how it is that many persons have thwarted the development of their minds because they would not allow their thoughts to grow and expand with each moment of association with the silent presence of God. Does not your mind grow and expand through your association with nature? Much more ought the mind to grow in comprehension through its association with the presence of the All-Good.

Concentration

Concentration is singleness of mind or purpose. The mistaken idea of concentration is that it is attention held fixedly to a point, or to a word, or to a thought. Fixity is limitation. True concentration is that sort of interest in which all the forces of your being are intent on a given objective, or unified in a given purpose.

Concentration, like relaxation, is attained not through strenuous effort but through quiet means, reasonable processes, by which the mind's interest is awakened and complete attention is attained. This concentration of the silence is best attained by continually turning the attention to the infinite nature of God, in whom "we live, and move, and have our being." Reading the 139th Psalm should be one of the most helpful means of awakening the interest, leading the attention, and gaining concentration of the most effective and desirable sort. Above all, make the approach to the silence pleasant, interesting, joyous. Have you in the olden days thought what your attitude would be when you should enter the kingdom of heaven that the race has pictured as being in the skies? When you enter into the silence in the fullest sense of the word, you are literally approaching the kingdom of heaven that the Scriptures teach is "within

you." Therefore rejoice and be glad. "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise."

Inspiration

The Scriptures say, "There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration [breath; A.S.V.] of the Almighty giveth them understanding." This has been more or less a mystical statement to us, for we have not understood just what this inspiration is. Have you not at times noticed yourself taking on or absorbing something of your environment, particularly when you have been thrown into close and prolonged touch with that environment? You simply absorb the impressions coming to you from the environment, and these impressions give you a new understanding of your surroundings, which in turn affects your nature to some extent. In like manner he who associates much in thought with his divine environment receives impressions from it, and his nature is altered accordingly. The inbreathing or the impressions coming to him from the divine presence enable him better to understand the Almighty, and his mind and body are changed accordingly. The very nature and being of God is within reach of your mind; He is within you, throughout your being, surrounding you, above you, beneath you—as the only power, the only presence, in the universe. Listen, wait, watch, until you recognize His presence to be more truly your environment than are the things of the world. Within this holy presence is the very word of God, the formulated ideal that God has of you, and for you, waiting to speak itself into full and perfect expression in every department of your being and in all the affairs of your life. Listen! This is the approach to the secret place of the Most High. What could more fascinate your mind? What could more absorbingly hold your interest to the exclusion of everything else ?

Length of Silence Period

The question is often asked, at this point in the lessons, "How long should one remain in the silence?" It is just as impractical to attempt to answer this question as it would be to tell a person how long he should take for eating his meals. However, we might say that, in the beginning, rather short periods are to be recommended.

It should be remembered that man develops in his nature that which he exercises. In practicing the silence, therefore, one should exercise only the attitudes of mind that

tend to bring out the most desirable experiences. For instance, many persons put forth so much effort in holding their attention on what they consider the silence that "effort" is the dominant factor in the practice. The effort habit is therefore developed until it becomes the dominant experience, and the entire being rebels at the thought of the silence, because it seems to man nothing but hard work.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah." In this passage is revealed one of the most important secrets of life. "Let us reason together" does not apply only to a relationship between persons. It applies likewise to the various departments of your own being. Interested attention can be cultivated by a reasonable appeal to the mind, rather than by a resort to forceful or dominant measures. Just as you respond to reasonable methods more readily than to forceful measures, so does your mind follow and respond to processes that are agreeable to it. Talk things out with yourself. Even talk aloud, if need be, to get your mind's attention. Remind yourself that in the infinite Mind of God, which is present within you, are the very knowledge, power, and ability that will meet every situation in life. What could be more interesting than to delve into the realm that contains everything that a being could wish or desire? Such is the realm of the divine presence. By reminding yourself of this fact, you will find the mind eagerly giving its complete attention to this wonderful communion. When you have reached this conception of the silence, you will find that the length of the silence period will increase. Genuine interest has little regard for the passing of hours.

However, we do not recommend that the period of silence continue for too long a time. The silence is to soul and mind what food is to the body. What is gained in the silence must be converted into action; must be incorporated into the very cell structure of our being. We but gain the incentive for growth in the silence. Real growth is in expression of what we have gained in moments of communion with the Most High. In other words, we gain in the silence just what the automobile gains by stopping at the filling station—just so much motive power to be used in attaining an objective. Knowledge and realization gained in the silence become motive power that governs the outer life of man and quickens him with the magic power of attainment.

The most important thing to consider in connection with the silence is the conscious revelation that comes from Spirit. The Spirit of God will and does reveal that which your being is ready for and open to receive. This revelation is not at all likely to

continue beyond the point of your actual readiness to appropriate. Therefore when you seem to have been fed, when you have received, it is time to leave the silence in order that the realization gained therein may be continued in your daily activities.

Place and Position

The questions are often asked: "Where should one go for the practice of the silence," and "In what position should the body be placed." As to the place, it is well in the beginning for one to find a place as free as possible from disturbing influences. But one should remember that it is in distracting circumstances that realization of the presence of God is most needed. Therefore, the quiet place should be looked on only as a retreat for special communion. In leaving the quiet place, endeavor to feel that the Presence, of which you become aware in the silence, is a tower of strength to you in every way.

As to one's physical posture: The only suggestion that we would make is that one should be physically comfortable, free from strain, so that the body itself is not a disturbing factor or a distracting influence. The seeker should plan in all ways to be totally unconscious of his body, his thoughts, his surroundings, and in fact everything but the power and presence of God. This is the supreme objective, and the more this objective is kept uppermost in mind the more nearly complete will be the realization.

The Light

Every time we turn our thoughts toward the indwelling Spirit of God to contemplate its power and presence, we turn our face toward the light, "the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world." In this light we can not only learn who and what we are, but we can also learn what is the will of God for us in every phase of life. In the days that follow, ask yourself many times whether you are truly interested in receiving this light. If you are interested, keep your attention turned toward it, that you may not lose a single ray of its radiance. Keep physically relaxed so that every ray of this light may penetrate the innermost and the outermost parts of your being. In the light of Spirit you will not only realize the truth about life but you will be blessed with an everlasting blessing by the one and only presence and power in the universe, the presence and power that God is.

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee."

What the Silence Really Is

In presenting this second lesson on the silence, it is taken for granted that you have read and thoroughly practiced the first lesson. This is not a book to be read like fiction, but it is to be treated as you would treat a book on mathematics. Practice each point until you begin to realize results from it, and then pass on to the next point. Do not be in a hurry to cover the entire text, but be persistent in accomplishing the purpose of each part of the book.

Many people fail to gain a realization of what the silence really is, because they have some false ideas regarding the silence and are practicing these ideas instead of seeking a clearer understanding of it.

The silence is not an end in itself; it is merely a means to an end. It is only the threshold to greater things, for beyond the silence lie all the infinite resources of God. To open the door and pass this threshold into the presence of Being, consciously living and moving and having your being in God, is your privilege. Once you have entered into the light, continue to walk in the light, for the light becomes your life.

Man's life is as limited as his ideas. If his ideas have been developed through material associations alone, his life is held in confinement to the measure of material standards. In other words, knowledge is to man what light is to the plant. Only the measure of light that the plant succeeds in incorporating into itself becomes its life. The Scriptures teach clearly that eternal life is in knowing God, and Jesus Christ, whom "he hath sent."

As has been said, the silence is very simple; in fact, it is one of the simplest functions of the mind. Every time we stop to listen, every time we open our mind to receive a new idea, a new impression, or a new inspiration, we practice consciously or unconsciously, all the processes of the silence. Whether we receive the intended idea, impression, or inspiration is another thing, for these impressions pertain to the realm

that we have designated as "beyond the silence." The only difference between the attitude of mind here mentioned and the practice of the silence as referred to in these lessons is that the silence is a state of open-mindedness toward God, the one and only presence and power in the universe. The processes are identical, but the objects are to gain knowledge of different kinds from different sources. In the first instance the knowledge gained is of the external world, and in the second instance the knowledge gained is of the inner, spiritual facts back of the external world.

The process of the silence might be simply illustrated by the case of a child saying to its mother, "Mother, tell me a story." There necessarily follows a period of stillness between the asking for a story and the time when the telling of the story actually begins. This period may be long or short, according to conditions in the mind or conduct of both the child and the mother. However, sooner or later the revelation of the story begins, and while the child continues to be silent he is at the same time receiving the revelation, which comes only after he has become still. The revelation continues only so long as the child remains still. The child's stillness is the silence, and the unfoldment of the story is what we refer to as "beyond the silence."

Receptivity to impressions depends largely on the importance that we place on the thing or condition that we wish to know about. The less important it seems to us, the less likely we are to be still, with interested attention. On the other hand, the more important it seems to us, the stiller we automatically become and the more intent is our interest. In proof of this statement, observe what takes place when we sit in an audience before a lecturer. If the speaker is a person of note, one in whom we have great interest and from whom we expect great things, we instantly become still when he arises to speak, and one could literally hear a pin drop. This stillness is in direct proportion to the interest of the audience in the speaker. If the speaker lives up to our expectation, we continue to keep still, but the moment he fails to interest us, we begin to plan ways of possible escape. A speaker who was considered of no importance would have great difficulty in quieting an audience so as to be heard at all.

The greatest possible degree of stillness should come to a person when he realizes that he is in the presence of God, a presence that would be awe-inspiring to anyone realizing the facts of the situation. As a simple turn of the radio dial will bring one in contact with almost any sort of music or entertainment, so man, by the simple turning

of his attention, is immediately in tune with the wisdom, the strength, the life, the power, and the substance of God. In fact, no need can develop in the life of man for which he cannot, by the simple act of turning his attention to the thought of God's presence, immediately experience fulfillment. What other fact could be more fascinating? If God is omnipresence, all places are holy, and you are continually standing in His presence. When you realize this, the truth of God's omnipresence dawns on you; it instantly quiets every disturbed or troublesome thought and fills your whole being with an infinite calm, bringing you to a state in which you hear distinctly the "still small voice" within. Then, add to this realization the eternal command to all men, "Be still, and know that I am God," and there will be no difficulty whatever in keeping silence before Him. You may gain further help in this direction by saying to every disquieting thought, "Peace, be still." When silence is realized, look well to that which is to come to you out of this stillness. The silence is but the hem of His garment, while the whole robe of righteousness is for you.

Affirmation

The question naturally arises at this point: What part does affirmation play in the practice of the silence? You may best understand the place and function of an affirmation if you will consider it in the same relation to the divine principle as you would consider a mathematical rule in its relation to the principle of mathematics.

Affirmations may be presented to our consciousness in any one of three ways: firstly, by someone's formulating a thought and stating it to us either verbally or in written form; secondly, by our formulating in our own intellectual mind a thought that expresses a certain truth or condition which we wish to realize; thirdly, by a spontaneous expression of some truth about man's being, which the very soul realizes is the fulfillment of divine purpose. This is the most potent form of affirmation and carries the greatest degree of creative power. You can say "I am happy," affirming a desired condition, and such a statement will be helpful; but when you say "I am happy," expressing an inward joy, it carries the power of your conviction.

Affirmations that are taken from outside sources may or may not have in them a great deal of quickening energy for the one that uses them. The effect of an affirmation is determined largely by the individual's understanding of the Truth and meaning back of

the words. The Scriptures state clearly, "In praying use not vain repetitions." Just as with any other process in life, the effectiveness of affirmation lies in its intelligent, understanding use as a process designed to produce a desired result.

An affirmation, as used in applying the principles of practical Christianity, is generally expected to be a statement of absolute Truth from the viewpoint of Being. One can affirm that 2 and 2 equals 5, yet the statement is not an affirmation of mathematical truth. An affirmation of spiritual Truth must conform to the principles of Truth, regardless of apparent facts. If you saw "2 plus 2 equals 5" on the blackboard, you would immediately say, "2 plus 2 equals A." The power of your statement, the authority with which you speak, and the results that follow are all determined by the fact that your declaration expresses the underlying Truth, regardless of all appearances.

The incorrect problem on the blackboard and your declaration of the mathematical truth about it brings up another important point in the use of affirmation. Do you make the correct declaration to compel something to be so, or is it because it is already so? The fact is that you make the declaration because it is true, and this truth causes a rearrangement of the figures on the board. Always remember that the power of an affirmation is in the spiritual fact described, and this, when understood and applied, compels a corresponding change in outward appearances. Herein lies the true effectiveness of affirmation: It is true in God and, being true in God, it is an unalterable fact in life and all external things must give way to express this fact.

God is omnipresent, therefore everything that is true of God is true at every point in the universe; therefore it is true of me, of every other member of the race, and within every atom of the universe. Truth is the same yesterday, today, and forever; therefore everything that was true at one time, or that ever will be true in the future, is true now. When we make an affirmation or declare anything that is true of God, with this realization of Truth, we see at once that the moving force within our affirmation does not arise from our own mind, but is a power that infinitely transcends the activity of our mind. That which is true universally has within it the moving force of the universe, the moving force of God, of the Spirit which moved "upon the face of the deep" in the beginning. This is the spirit that "giveth life." This is power supreme, and when we allow this power to move through us in the same degree, the result will be the same as

came about in the life of Jesus when He declared, "The Father abiding in me doeth his works."

In the first place, affirmation is to be used merely for the purpose of educating the conscious self to a knowledge of that which is true in a universal sense. When our mind is purified and lifted up to the knowledge of Truth, we shall be forever free from the multitude of false beliefs that inhabit our mind at the present time and we shall know ourselves as we are known in God. However, this change is not complete with the change of thoughts in individual consciousness. The process must be carried on until the whole manifest world is changed to conform to the standards of universal Truth.

There are three questions that a person may well ask of every affirmation that comes to him, questions that will help him to arrive at an intelligent understanding of its meaning and the process of Truth involved in it. The first of these questions is: What does it mean? The second may be stated as follows: Is it true to Principle—true to the fact that God is omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, embodying all life, all love, all substance, all intelligence, and being the same at all points in the universe? In the third place he may ask: Do I believe it? Faith is your vital contact with anything in life. If you understand your affirmation, if it

is true to Principle, and if you thoroughly believe it, then make it in the fullest assurance that it will inevitably bring forth perfect results, for it has back of it all the authority and power of the universe.

Finally, through use of the intellectually formed affirmation the conscious mind becomes sufficiently purified to enable it to record the pure impulses of the soul. The affirmations are spontaneously formed from within and are spoken in the realization of Truth rather than for the purpose of developing a realization of Truth. It is like the change that takes place with a child in studying the piano. First he practices that he may become a musician. Finally, when he arrives at a certain point of musical development, his playing is an expression of his developed musical sense. However, the preliminary practice helped him to attain to this point.

The point in connection with affirmation that we wish to make very clear is this: In the use of affirmations, feel that they are but a means by which you are carried into a realization of the Truth which they describe. Try to feel that as you are making these statements you are being carried closer and closer into the very heart of the one Presence and one Power, and that your words derive their power from the infinite action of the one Presence and one Power.

In selecting affirmations try to be reasonably sure that they are true from the viewpoint of God. Then use them to lift yourself into a clearer realization of the Truth involved in each statement. To practice an affirmation in the silence is to accept it as a vehicle through which the activity of Spirit is manifesting in your being.

Like the calm that follows the storm, there come times when affirmations or other methods of prayer do not seem to suffice, when one wishes merely to be still in the presence of God. Such a time is really a phase of the silence—that phase which intervenes between the activity of an idea which has fulfilled its mission and the coming forth of a new idea which is related to one's next step in spiritual evolution. It is accompanied by a sense such as is expressed in the sentence, "Jehovah is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." At such times it requires no effort to remain silent in order that one's spirit may mingle, as it were, with the great Spirit of God. These are moments of high revelation when God speaks to the very heart and mind of man.

But, you may ask, how may I know when I have touched the presence of God? You may know it because there is no other presence to touch, unless you have a belief in another presence. If you will stick to the premise with which we started, there will be no mistaking the divine presence. However, there are many degrees of contacts with God, and we gain the blessings of each degree by acknowledging Him continually.

The Hem of His Garment

Another way of describing the silence itself is that it is a period of stillness which intervenes between the activity of our own ideas and the time when we become conscious of the activity of God-Mind. This is true in one sense, yet in another sense this very stillness is in itself our very first conscious contact with God-Mind, if we but

realize it. Is not God the great silent force moving in and through all creation? If so, the moment we come into a sense of stillness we have actually become aware of the very first attribute of God—we have touched the hem of His garment. To acknowledge this sense of stillness as the very presence of God—which it is—is to take the first and most vital step toward actual revelation of further degrees of the divine nature, which lie beyond this hem of His garment, this outermost nature of the divine presence.

In further connection with the period that intervenes between the activity of an idea which has fulfilled its mission and the activity of a new idea which takes its place, let us know this once for all: The ideas of yesterday are inadequate to meet the demands of a growing soul. No matter how great yesterday's experience may have been, we should look forward each day in anticipation of still greater revelations. Sometimes, however, because of our own mental lethargy or for some other reason we do not pass quickly over the transitional period; consequently we experience a depression. We are quite likely to reach the condition that Jesus had reached during the Crucifixion when He cried out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This cry preceded His resurrection by only a short period. So it does with us. Such periods are not only evidence that our former ideas have run their course, but are prophetic of a new cycle of experience, the dawn of a new creation in us, the herald of the next step in our spiritual growth. Instead of being times of despondency or discouragement, they should be times of keenest anticipation, of a new hope arising from the fact that we have arrived at the point of spiritual revelation. At such times one's expectancy should be at its highest, for God is about to speak to one. At such moments in the future, let us look forward to a new revelation that shall, for another period of progress, be our very meat and drink.

Going Within

At this point it would be well for us to consider the idea of "going within" and its application to the silence. The idea of going within originates from the scriptural teaching regarding the kingdom of heaven's being within us, and from the directions regarding prayer given by Jesus in His instruction to "enter into thine inner chamber."

This going within literally means going to the spiritual fact that lies back of the outer manifestation. Let us go back to our reference to mathematics in a previous

paragraph. To consider the mathematical fact back of the figures on the blackboard is equivalent to going within. The figures themselves are the without, the appearance; whether they are right or wrong, the inner fact, or the within, is the truth. In addition to this, however, a knowledge of the fact must exist in the consciousness of the individual.

Again, to be conscious of the inner facts of Spirit involves a faculty of the mind not understandingly used in man's daily affairs; this faculty is the discerning power of the intuitional nature. Intuition has its seat in the more sensitive portion of man's sympathetic nervous system, known as the solar plexus; man's spiritual revelations come through this inner sense, which seems to have its means of contact with man's consciousness in the very innermost parts of his being. Going within therefore has a double significance. God is Spirit, and the things of God are spiritually discerned: that is the revelation sought in the process of going within, for it is through discernment by the inner intuitional nature that this revelation actually comes into consciousness. But one should remember that the inner facts of life —the spiritual facts—are the same at every point in the universe; also that things which are true at any point in the universe, the facts pertaining to God, are also present and true within your own being. If, in your search for this underlying truth, you go beyond your own body, beyond your own ideas, to that point where all sense of self ceases, then you stand face to face with the allness of God; then you have truly found the silence.

Again, the silence may be likened to the experience that was the writer's when he first saw the Grand Canyon. The train arrived early in the morning, and before the tourists went into the hotel for breakfast it was quite natural for them to run over to the rim of the canyon for a first glimpse of it. It was so immense and beautiful that the mind could not take it in. After breakfast another visit to the rim, and still there was the utter inability of the mind to grasp the grandeur of the scene. In fact, the canyon was so immense that one's attempt to comprehend it seemed to paralyze the mind. After each visit to the rim it seemed necessary to retire into the quiet of the surrounding woods in order that the mind might adjust itself to the grandeur and beauty and immensity of this marvelous spectacle. It was awe inspiring. This absolute enthrallment of the mind is quite similar to the experience that man has when he really enters the silence, conscious that in so doing he actually enters the presence of God. Here he realizes how futile his own thinking is, for as the heavens are high above the earth, so

are the thoughts of God above the thoughts of man. This is the silence of the gods, where man so closely touches the divine nature that his own independent thinking processes are lost to sight in contemplation and realization of the infinite activity in the processes of God. Here one begins to realize the infinity of the "Spirit of God" that "in the beginning . . . moved upon the face of the waters," and feels it as the life-giving power of the inspiration of the Almighty.

The simplest and perhaps most effective means of making the silence, and the process of entering it, perfectly clear is the illustration of the echo. No doubt you have at some time stood in a canyon or other place where you could hear the echo of your own voice. After you said "hello" and paused for a moment, there came back to you from the depths of the canyon the echo of that same hello. Your call echoed and re-echoed, softer, fainter, and farther away, until it eventually died away entirely. Many people are interested only in the echo and they keep the canyon vibrant with the noise of their own voices. One who might be interested beyond this point has but to continue to listen, and finally a great sense of stillness and perfect calm seems to settle down around him. In that moment he touches a phase of life that is never known to those who busy themselves only with the processes of their own minds or voices. The stillness of the canyon is identical with the silence as we refer to it, except that in the silence one has paused in the presence of God and has sent forth his call to know the nature of Being. As man waits until the reaction of his own thought processes ceases, he finds himself face to face with the Infinite. This is the real silence, and, while but the threshold of the Infinite, it is the very hem of His garment, with healing and illuminating power for any who will persist until he touches it.

"Be still, and know that I am God." Do not worry about appearances or lack of appearances. In perfect confidence look toward the land that lies beyond the silence, knowing that from beyond the stillness—from beyond your own unformed states of consciousness, from beyond your doubts and fears—will come the light that "shineth in the darkness," and in the light will be revealed a vision of that which you are in God. Thus each day you will bring forth more of the image and likeness of God, in which you were created in the beginning.

Hear this, all ye people;

Give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world . . . My mouth shall speak wisdom; And the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.

Beyond the Silence

One of the most important things to remember in connection with the silence is the fact that it is only a means to an end. In order that the fullest benefits may be derived from the practice of the silence, one must constantly go beyond the point of mere mental stillness and allow the elements of the spiritual realm to come forth into consciousness. For beyond the silence is the answer to every question, the fulfillment of every desire, and the solution to every problem that can arise in the experiences of life.

All the progress of the race in any direction has come from a knowing or an unknowing practice of the principles involved in the silence. True, not everyone who has brought forth new ideas has recognized his oneness with God-Mind, but every progressive idea has come directly or indirectly from the one creative Mind. Because the individual received that idea, he must at some moment have been in tune with this Mind. Aside from the experience of mystics and philosophers of the past, this realm of the infinite Mind, even though it is "over all, and through all, and in all," is an unexplored country. Though man has enjoyed many of its benefits, he has seldom known or recognized their source, nor the process by which they have been brought forth for him.

The Guides

In exploring a strange country it is always wise for the traveler to have guides who lead the way. Aimless wandering among strange surroundings seldom yields satisfying results. The guides into the realm beyond the silence are faith, interest, and a steadfast vision toward the highest. These factors of the mind lend stability to its action and keep the individual from wandering into bypaths. They insure the possibility of realizing the objective beyond the silence, by leading the traveler into the one Presence and one Power of the universe, where all things are revealed.

It is said that God has His second best for those who will not have His best. Dare to seek the highest; dare to approach the very heart of the Most High; dare to make direct contact with the all-knowing, all-loving Father of the universe and to let His Spirit fill your consciousness with new light, your body with new life, and your whole being with new substance.

We follow where attention and interest lead, and there comes to us a revelation of the nature of the object on which our attention and interest are centered. If they are centered on the bypaths, or the mere results we think that we desire, we may receive the by-products of life; but not the satisfaction that comes with genuine spiritual attainment, wherein is life itself. If they lead into the very heart of Being, there comes to us the Truth that makes free, the knowledge that makes alive.

Acquaintance

"Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace." Acquaintance comes through association, and association involves a mutual exchange of thought and feeling. We become acquainted with others as they express themselves to us in terms of thought and feeling. We shall come to know God by giving Him opportunity to reveal Himself to us in terms of His own thought and feeling toward us. We may know God in a general sense, but our knowing never reaches the point of acquaintanceship until we have stilled our mind long enough to register those things by which and through which God reveals Himself. "Be still, and know." Be still, and know.

No doubt everyone has had some experience with the type of mind that belongs to the person who might be termed the "talkative questioner." This person is very eager to ask you some question—or usually questions. No sooner is the first question out of his mouth than he begins talking, sometimes about the question in his mind, and sometimes on unrelated subjects. Should you be given opportunity to attempt an answer, instead of listening to your answer this person is formulating still another question, and so on indefinitely. Finally, after a session of considerable duration he exhausts either himself, his time, or his breath and bids you good-by, entirely forgetting about the question that he originally asked. Every metaphysician has met minds of this type. You can become very well acquainted with a person of this sort, but

he himself receives little from the acquaintance except the reaction of his own thoughts.

In our search for divine revelation, do we not often proceed somewhat after this fashion? Do we not too often keep up an incessant clamor of some sort, either prayers, affirmations, or rituals, until it is quite impossible for the Spirit of truth to make itself known to us? Just as we learn, from friends and other sources, ideas that come from beyond our present concepts, just so shall we learn the things that are in God, and infinitely beyond our present ideas, by allowing Him at least some opportunity to answer our questions and to reveal Himself to us as the source and the supply of our every need.

When a person learns to be still long enough actually to feel or to be conscious of the presence of God, a new understanding begins to develop in his consciousness. Ideas so developed convey more meaning and power than ideas originating from other sources. One may gain a knowledge of the difference in the force of various ideas by studying the difference between the casual thought and the thought that comes from one's deepest conviction. It is therefore easy to comprehend how thoughts coming from the very foundation of one's being, from the very source of life itself, convey a transcendent power. It should be kept in mind that ideas convey power in accordance with the source from which they arise and the realm in which they function. It is especially important that this be remembered in connection with the use of affirmation.

Affirmation

The mere repetition of an affirmation carries only the power that is characteristic of the mental plane. A parrot might be taught to repeat the most intricate mathematical rule, but would it be possible for the parrot to speak with the authority and power of a mathematician who fully comprehended the meaning of the rule? This is the exact difference between "vain repetitions" and speaking from an inner conviction of Truth. Ideas expressed in the realization or understanding that they are statements of absolute Truth, and that within the idea itself is a moving force which is spiritual, increase to a very great extent the power and authority of the affirmation. The most potent thought, however, is the one that comes forth as a conscious revelation

from the Spirit within man, and its potency is retained just as long as the thought is allowed to function consciously as an expression of Divine Mind, unadulterated by the efforts, emphasis, or other characteristics of the purely personal mind.

The Answer

It is impossible to foretell just what your response from beyond the silence will be, or in what form it will come. It may come from within your own nature, or it may come through the word of a friend or through the printed pages of some book. However, it will be whatever is most needed in your spiritual development and it will come by any channel through which your consciousness can be reached.

Your work is to prepare your entire consciousness so that you may be most receptive to the inspiration of Spirit. No response will come except that which is born of God, if you are faithful in your realization that there is "but one Presence and one Power in the universe." As your search for Truth continues, there will be built into your being more of the elements of God, and this will increase your ability to comprehend still more of God, just as every bit of developed musical consciousness increases an individual's musical comprehension. "For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth save the Spirit of God."

You can more easily understand some of the things that will come to you in response to the practice of the silence if you will recall your experience with the echo to which we have previously referred. If you were sufficiently interested to listen after the echo had entirely died away, you would first have become aware of a great calm or sense of stillness that would have seemed literally to settle down and to permeate the entire atmosphere of your surroundings. Two planes of discovery may be opened to you out of or from beyond this stillness. First, you may record through your senses the sights and sounds that come through the keenness of mind that is possible only in moments of intense stillness. Again, you may record impulses of nature that are not discernible to the seeing eye or the hearing ear. But beyond this is a still greater and more significant fact, for the silence itself is your direct revelation of the very first characteristic of the divine nature. God moves through His creation in absolute silence, and this is why it is difficult for some persons to believe in the presence and

reality of God. As Dr. Frank Crane has said, "He never blusters, hence humbugs cannot understand how He exists." God does not reveal Himself to man through any sensational display of force, but through the quietness of His own nature. The moment it dawns on you that the first sense of stillness which you feel as you practice the silence is the actual presence of God, that moment you have passed into the realm "beyond the silence," for then there comes to you a conscious revelation of one of the outstanding characteristics of God Himself. But back of the silent nature of God lie all the numberless phases and degrees of Him who is all. The silence then becomes the locus for receiving the inspiration of the Almighty that gives understanding; the locus where the Spirit of truth becomes the only teacher, where man gains knowledge of the Infinite at first hand. Silence ceases to be mere stillness and becomes the unfolding presence of Divinity itself. At this moment you have literally touched the hem of His garment, and the complete reconstruction of your nature begins.

As it begins to dawn on you that you have actual contact with God in this sense of stillness, you will no doubt feel some degree of exaltation or inspiration. You may be conscious of this as a quickening energy, filling your entire being. This exaltation in turn should be acknowledged as of God—as the very quickening power of His Spirit. It is the divine presence manifest as the vitalizing life of Spirit, and the whole being should be relaxed and open to receive it as such. Again, great and inspiring ideas may come, and these in turn should be recognized as coming from the Father-Mind to enrich and enlighten the consciousness.

Revelation is likely to come to you through whatever avenue of your mind is most open or receptive to Divine Mind. Some persons receive their revelations in symbols, or in mental pictures, or in symbolical dreams. To these is given the additional task of interpreting the symbol and discovering the hidden meaning. But many who receive these symbols are content merely to contemplate the mental picture or to recite the mere "story" part of a dream without regard to the meaning. If any practical value is to be gained from these visions or dreams, their meaning must be understood. "What is the meaning of these things?" is the question for such a person to ask of himself and of the infinite Mind from which all true knowledge comes. The interpretation follows easily if one recognizes that the symbols come from Spirit and if one then seeks in Spirit to find their meaning. Through seeking thus to understand the direct meaning of all such experiences, one becomes more and more conscious of the inspiration of

Spirit, and sooner or later one's revelations will assume more direct form and the symbols become fewer and fewer.

But very often someone will say that even though he has practiced the silence faithfully, seeking an answer to some question, the answer is not forthcoming. The truth is that the answer has been present all the time.

The very fact that the one all-knowing Mind interpenetrates your mind and being, just as light interpenetrates glass, involves the further fact that the answer to your question is in that mind and that the answer is therefore in you, through you, and around you. Often we hinder the progress of the answer in its coming forth into our consciousness by denying it. We say, "The answer did not come," thereby closing the door of our consciousness so that the answer, awaiting us, cannot come in. The right attitude to assume is this: "Because God knows. I also know, for I am in God and God is in me." Acknowledging God in all our ways is the surest way of preparing the mind to receive blessings beyond our present ability to contain them.

People sometimes ask, "How may we know that the response which comes to us in this way is spiritual?" To make sure that your response is spiritual, you must begin with the premise set down in the first lesson of this course: "There is but one Presence and one Power in the universe." If this truth becomes firmly established in consciousness, the mind is not open to receive impressions from any other source. It is only our belief in other forces and powers that makes them seem real to us. It is our faith in things that puts us in contact with them, and if we believe only in God, only the Spirit of God can manifest itself in us. But the mind must become "stayed" on Him.

One must learn that, first of all, the silence is a definite opening of the mind to the revelations of the Spirit of God. The silence is not the opening of the mind to anything that may choose to come along; neither is it a search into the subconscious mind to discover things of the past, or the purported powers contained therein. It is a search into the superconscious mind to discover the ideas and ideals that function in the perfect Mind of God. This rule should be remembered continually and practiced very diligently.

Self-Control

As a natural result of practicing the silence, there is a marked increase in the mental and physical forces of the individual. It is therefore of greatest importance that every seeker after Truth begin consciously to direct all his forces into channels that seem at the time to be most desirable and tend toward the furtherance of his highest ideals. In other words self-control becomes a necessary part of the practice of the student. Here, however, a distinct difference must be recognized between suppression and direction of one's forces. One may, by mere force of will, dominate any mental or physical force, and seem to control it; but the ultimate result of this method is detrimental. A very good mental attitude to assume is: "All the forces of my mind and body are under the direction of divine intelligence; they are lifted up daily, supporting the Christ ideal now forming itself in me." The next step will be daily to incorporate these awakened forces into the very fabric of one's being—to make them a part of oneself, rather than to direct them to the attainment of mere possessions. Say, "I am the wisdom of God made manifest; I am the love of God brought forth; I am the strength of God expressed; I am the life of God quickening all creation with living energy," or words to that effect, as wisdom, love, strength, or life is awakened in you in new degree. Always remember that each of these is divine, that each remains in the Father and at the same time becomes a part of you as a manifestation of the Father. In other words, a truly spiritual being is one conscious that all things taking place in his being are divine in origin, divine in action, and divine in results.

The Awakened Mind

The revelations that come through the practice of the silence are not attained by a slowing up of the mental processes. The revelations that come to us from outside sources —friends, books, and the like—do not require that we slow up our mental action. Quite the reverse is true, for mental activity is increased through an increased interest and through the receiving of new ideas and ideals. Every bit of additional information that registers in consciousness quickens the mental processes. The kind of action or quickening is determined by the nature of the information. Sad news makes one sad, joyous news makes one joyous, and spiritual revelation fills one with the quickening energy of Spirit. Divine Mind is a realm of supreme activity, and when it finds expression in the individual, his mental action is accordingly increased.

The Avenue

At this point it is natural for one to wonder through what particular avenue spiritual revelation may come. This is difficult to determine, because it may come through any avenue. If one is accustomed to look at the beauties of nature through his physical eyes and to contemplate nature as the handiwork of God, such contemplation is sure to bring some degree of spiritual illumination. The same is true of a like application of any of the other senses, for God is all, in all, through all, and above all, and beside Him there is no other. Wherever man earnestly looks for God he will eventually find Him to some degree. However, one seems naturally to expect spiritual revelation to come through the intuitive faculty, the avenue through which are registered impressions of a character too fine for the other senses to convey. "God is Spirit, and the things of God are spiritually discerned."

When a person discovers that the things of God are spiritually discerned, he often begins to belittle the senses and to deny the plane revealed by them. This should not be done, because the senses play their own vital part in developing complete consciousness. Through the testimony of every available source of information, the whole Truth is established. The intuitive faculty is an additional source of information. When, in addition to seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling, one can also discern the underlying and creative principle that brought forth the thing that is seen, smelled, heard, tasted, and felt, then one knows the whole Truth and can "speak with the tongues of men and of angels." In approaching life from this basis, the eyes will see with a keener vision, the ears hear with a greater accuracy, and all the other senses will become strengthened, each tending to register more nearly the truth about everything and everybody.

Beyond the Answer

We can but illustrate in a general way the infinite blessings that come from beyond the silence, from beyond the present range of our sense perception, and hence from beyond the comprehension of our present understanding. Man can really know of these blessings only by being still, by receiving the inspiration of the Almighty and by partaking of the divine nature for himself.

Beyond the silence is the answer to every question, but beyond the answer is the action or appropriation necessary to the fulfillment of our desire. Having found Spirit, "by the Spirit let us also walk," for only by action do we grow and only by daily conduct in accordance with our spiritual revelations do we become truly spiritual. It is not enough to live in the calm quiet of the silence, wonderful as that may be; neither is it enough to live in the great realm of spiritual inspiration which lies beyond the silence. Unless the things of Spirit are lived by us, unless they become vital parts of our conscious, active being, they fall short of fulfilling in us their divine purpose.

These lessons have been a mere introduction, as it were, to the great realm of infinite blessings that God has created for all men. They are not to be followed too literally. Out of the points that have been presented take those that seem to be of help in your specific case; apply them in earnestness, looking to the infinite Mind within you for your own revelations as to just what the silence is and what the great secrets of life are.

What your own soul sanctions is Truth to you for the moment, and in its revelations to you the Spirit of truth in you has spoken. That this voice of Truth may continue to speak to you long after the lessons are forgotten is the real object of the lessons themselves. Look to the country that we have tried to point out to you, and leave by the wayside the sign which has merely served the purpose of pointing out the way. The Spirit of truth you have always with you, and it is your eternal and sure guide into the way of all Truth; it will speak to you if you listen for its words.

The Practice of the Silence

The first thing that you should do in your attempts to practice the silence is to be comfortably seated, so that your mind will be as free as possible from any thought of the body.

Second. You should remember that this period of silence is a period of prayer, a period of conscious communion with God.

Third. Interest in discovering the nature of God and what God wishes to reveal to you is the chief factor to be sought in keeping the attention fixed on your objective. Sometimes when difficulty is experienced in keeping the attention centered on the presence of God, it is well to say aloud a few times this basic statement: "There is only one Presence and one Power in the universe, the presence and power of God." Then you might audibly declare, "Jehovah is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him."

Fourth. With all the interest that you can arouse, become very still, listening with your whole being to catch whatever degree of the divine presence may be revealed to you.

Fifth. If no conscious revelation seems to be apparent at the close of your silence period, acknowledge that the presence and power of God, being a universal fact, is a fact in you and that His infinite wisdom is unfolding in you, His eternal life is manifesting itself in you, and His inexhaustible substance is being formed in you continually. This keeps the way open for fulfillment in you.

Sixth. Do not make the period of silence too long in the beginning—perhaps only two or three minutes. Let it be only as long as your interest seems to hold you. Then purposely turn the mind to something else. Return to the silence period later in the day, or at whatever time you may designate for your next period of practice. A time just after arising in the morning and a time just before retiring at night are good

periods for your meditation. These periods, however, are no better than any others that may seem better adapted to your requirements.

Seventh. Never be discouraged if your experiences do not come as you have anticipated, or if you do not seem to make the progress that you would like to make. Only by practice does one become a musician, and it is by practice that one develops the new consciousness of spiritual things.

Eighth. On closing the silence period, an excellent attitude to assume would be the one set forth in this statement: "Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me. And I knew that thou hearest me always."