

JOHNNIE COLEMON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE ART OF MEDITATION

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CHAPTER 1

THE WAY

- I. Why do discords and inharmonies exist in the world? Is there an answer for them?
 - A. They exist because the world has not known God.
 - B. As we acquaint ourselves with God we find the secret of harmonious existence.
 1. Freedom is a condition of the soul.
 2. It comes forth by grace.
- II. What is the art of meditation? How does learning it help us?
 - A. The art of meditation is listening.
 - B. Truth becomes a living thing rather than an intellectual concept.
 - C. Through meditation we become convinced of the reality of God.
 1. The Word takes root in our consciousness and comes forth as spiritual fruitage.
 2. Our objective is to attain a measure of the Christ-Mind and let it take control.

CHAPTER II

THE PURPOSE

- I. Explain the importance of divine grace and how it is attained?
 - A. Satisfying relationships, abundant supply, successful business activity, and creative endeavor are the tangible effects of grace.
 - B. It can never be attained for the purpose of making demonstrations.
 - C. It is a realization of God attained through meditation.
- II. How must we pray effectively?
 - A. Our prayers must be addressed to a God of Spirit and therefore, that for which we pray must be of a spiritual nature.
 - B. We open our consciousness to let spirit reveal our need and its fulfillment.

- III. List some important guidelines for students of spiritual wisdom.
 - A. Our objective is the achievement of the Kingdom of God.
 - B. Our demonstration is our spiritual selfhood.
 - C. Our only desire should be the realization of God.
 - D. Our purpose for existence is to be a fitting instrument through which God's glory may appear.

CHAPTER III THE PRACTICE

- I. Is there a certain way that we should meditate?
 - A. No, each person must find the way which appeals to his particular consciousness.
 - B. All methods call forth a deep sense of humility that requires a letting go of personal selfhood.
- II. What is the contemplative stage of meditation?
 - A. It is the stage in which we become a beholder of God and His glory.
 - B. It reveals the cause of anything we behold.
- III. What should be our purpose for meditation?
 - A. Our purpose should be to develop a state of receptivity to the "still small voice."
 - B. We then wait to feel the activity of the Christ.

CHAPTER IV THE INDISSOLUBLE UNION

- I. How can we make continued progress along the Spiritual Path?
 - A. We must have a "God Experience."
 - B. We must give all our love and devotion to God.
 - C. We must be willing to accept the authority of our own inner revelation.
- II. What is the highest spiritual teaching given to the world?
 - A. The idea of God as one.
 - B. Knowing that, that which is true of God is true of ourselves as infinite individual being.
 - 1. Selfhood must cease struggling to maintain itself separate from God.

2. We must realize that fulfillment exists in consciousness as the consciousness of individual being.

CHAPTER V

THE DIFFICULTIES

- I. What are the necessary procedures for meditation?
 - A. Physical Posture: The body should be in a natural or comfortable position, so that the attention is not drawn to the body.
 - B. Frequency: Periods during our day should be devoted to its practice.
- II. Discuss some factors in the development of spiritual awareness.
 - A. Thoughts and actions in the human realm will not help our spiritual development.
 - B. Spirituality is developed through the reading of spiritual literature, the hearing of spiritual wisdom, association with those on the spiritual path and the practice of meditation.
 - C. Psychic experiences have nothing to do with the world of Spirit.
- III. Give some difficulties encountered in meditation.
 - A. The major one is the inability to hold the thought in one direction.
 - B. We have the habit of continuously thinking and talking.

CHAPTER VI

THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S

- I. What are the benefits of contemplative meditation?
 - A. We reach the silence and God reveals Himself.
 - B. We become witnesses of God on earth.
 - C. We transcend the desire to inform or ask God for anything.
- II. What brings us into the presence of God?
 - A. Anything that lifts our consciousness above the clamor of the senses.
 - B. When we reach the height of inspiration.

**CHAPTER VII
FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD**

- I. Explain the divine sonship.
 - A. God gave Himself to the world appearing as the Son of God.
 - B. We are the very essence of God unfolded, revealed and brought to active expression as individual being.
- II. Describe God's love.
 - A. It flows freely to the just and the unjust.
 - B. It is the supporting and animating influence of all creation.

**CHAPTER VIII
YE ARE THE TEMPLE**

- I. Explain how God made the body in Its own image.
 - A. An activity of God operates in a seed to bring forth a child.
 - B. Men and women are only instruments through which God acts to express Himself.
- II. How can we understand the difference between material and spiritual living?
 - A. We must look beyond the form and see the essence activating it.
 - B. By realizing that it is the truth entertained in our consciousness that is the law of life, of harmony and of the resurrection of our bodies.
 - C. By recognizing that the body which we see is a finite concept of the body.

**CHAPTER IX
THE SILVER IS MINE**

- I. Why is it important that we understand that God is the source of our supply?
 - A. It is the basis of our permanent supply.
 - B. It enlightens our consciousness so that it is filled with spiritual substance.
- II. Explain the role of our consciousness in regard to supply.
 - A. The "I" within us multiplies out of unseen resources of Spirit.
 - B. It is from our consciousness (invisible storehouse) that we draw.
 - C. We experience lack or are supplied by the state of our consciousness.

CHAPTER X
THE PLACE WHEREON THOU STANDEST

- I. How does infinity manifest through us?
 - A. It is manifested as our activity.
 - B. We play the part God assigns to us, remaining there until God moves us.
- II. What is the result of God pouring His good through us?
 - A. We become active in the work given to us each day.
 - B. We witness our good coming to us from within us.
- III. Describe a life lived by grace.
 - A. God brings the task to us and also the wisdom, understanding and strength to perform it.
 - B. Grace enables us to be free of undue burdens through realizing that God shoulders them.

CHAPTER XI
FOR LOVE IS OF GOD

- I. Discuss a new concept of human relations.
 - A. It is a relationship based on oneness.
 - B. The essential ingredient is love.
 - C. We learn to trust everyone to the God of his own being.
- II. What about the attitude of others and its effect on us?
 - A. Their attitude is strictly their own business.
 - B. Only in proportion as we look to them for good is there the possibility of them doing evil to us.

CHAPTER XII
FOR HE IS THY LIFE

- I. What is the difference between immortality and longevity?
 - A. Immortality is the realization of our true identity as God-being.
 - B. Longevity is a continuation of the present physical sense of existence.

- II. How can we cease living as human beings?
 - A. We must give up the concept of the body as constituting the sum total of our being.
 - B. Allow transitions to occur in consciousness whereby we completely rely on the Invisible.

CHAPTER XIII FEAR NOT

- I. What is the significance of a conscious union with God?
 - A. The human mind is no longer concerned with problems.
 - B. God is revealed as the fulfillment of every need.
 - C. It provides an inner peace not dependent on outer effects.
- II. Where is all power?
 - A. It is within us.
 - B. No good can come to you, because you are already established in good; no evil can disturb you because God is the measure of your good.

CHAPTER XIV THE TABERNACLE OF GOD

- I. What is the significance of the Holy place of worship?
 - A. It is a place where the earnest seeker could tabernacle with God.
 - B. The rites practiced there are outer symbols of an inner search for God.
- II. Give the spiritual significance of the symbolism of temple worship.
 - A. The sacrifice in the courtyard symbolizes the giving up of our faith and trust in human dependencies.
 - B. The rite of purification symbolizes the cleansing of our human sense of good.
 - C. The showbread present in the holy place represents the self completeness that is here now.
 - D. The seven branched candelabra represents the ever-abiding presence of spiritual light.

- E. The incense at the golden altar symbolizes our praises and thanksgiving for blessings received.

CHAPTER XV

THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS

- I. Explain how meditation is not an end in itself.
 - A. We are seeking a conscious realization of the presence of God.
 - B. We do not want God and me: We want God alone.
- II. What is one way we can bridge the gap between materiality and spirituality?
 - A. We can think of the beauty of nature.
 - B. We then recognize the invisible forces of nature which operated to bring into manifestation the form contemplated.
 - C. Such meditations will teach us to look through man to his divine origin.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

- I. What is meant by the statement, “loss often precedes gain”?
 - A. The present sense of life must be sacrificed that the spiritual sense may be gained.
 - B. The breaking up of old forms may appear as problems.
 - C. Once a person has been touched by the Spirit of the Lord, he is not disturbed by outer appearances.
 - D. One who has experienced the Christ gains more than what has been given up.
- II. Why are mountain and valley experiences a part of our lives?
 - A. They are part of the rhythmic cycle of human life.
 - B. In the valley that we cast off the burden of the human self.
 - C. There is a point of transition when the heights remain our permanent dwelling place.
- III. How should we make decisions?
 - A. We should turn to the Father within for guidance.
 - B. Overcome the habit of impatience by learning to wait for direction from God.

CHAPTER XVII
ILLUMINATION, COMMUNION AND UNION

- I. What kind of experience is illumination?
 - A. It is an individual experience dependent upon the realization of our relationship to God.
 - B. It cannot be shared with others. Nor can it be sought in the company of others.
 - C. It is possible to every individual in proportion to the intensity of his desire for it.

- II. How does a person experience communion and union?
 - A. Illumination leads to communion in which there is a reciprocal exchange; something flowing out from God into our consciousness and back again from our consciousness into the consciousness of God.
 - B. It cannot be brought about by any effort on our part; it cannot be forced.
 - C. In communion the activity of the Christ becomes a continuous experience.
 - D. Communion carried to its ultimate results in the final relationship which is union with God.
 - 1. When this stage is reached there are not two. There is only God expressing Itself, revealing Itself and fulfilling Itself.
 - 2. These rare and precious moments reveal the world as it is.

CHAPTER XVIII
A CIRCLE OF CHRIST HOOD

- I. Why has the Christhood by grace not been experienced by a group?
 - A. There has been no effective way of transmitting the Christ consciousness to large numbers.
 - B. Since the days of the great mystics there has been mere speculation in the realm of intellect.
 - C. Those that reached the high state of consciousness set up the worship of teacher rather than a practice of the teaching.

- II. What is the solution to all problems?
 - A. The resurrection of Christ in our consciousness is the miracle worker.
 - B. As the Christ becomes active in our consciousness on behalf of those who are receptive to It, It will begin to be an influence in their experience.