

A Lesson to Sam (by Joel S. Goldsmith)

Now, Sam, THIS LESSON is important because it is not just a lesson for one day. If you are faithful in putting this into practice, it will be sufficient for the rest of your life, even if you never receive another lesson from me.

I have been thinking about your going away to school and of how you will be able to live The Infinite Way when you are away from our personal influence, you mother's and mine, and when you may not do too much reading in my books. While I hope that you will do some reading each day, if only a page in one of my writings, even more would I like to have you learn this lesson, which I am about to give you, so well that, if you were alone on a desert island or out in a rubber boat in the middle of the ocean and had no person around you and no books with you, you could still survive and demonstrate your safety, your security, peace, food, clothing, housing, and everything necessary for your unfoldment.

I want to tell you the secret that has brought me happiness, joy, success, prosperity, and the ability to be of help to my fellow-man and to children throughout this world. I want you to know that secret so that you can go and do likewise.

First of all, whenever you are faced with any problem, whether it is one of health or one concerning your lessons at school, or let us say one that concerns your relationship with other boys in school or with your teachers, here is your first step: Get comfortable; close your eyes; put your feet on the floor; and now remember that God is closer to you than breathing; nearer than hands and feet. Right there, where you are standing or sitting or playing, God is. You have only to close your eyes, get quiet for a moment, and God will solve your problem.

It may sound strange to you that you don't have to tell God what your problem is or that you don't have to ask God for any favors, and that you don't even have to make any statements or affirmations. All you have to do is to close your eyes, get still for a moment, and realize that God is as close to you as inside your own chest. Then be patient for a few minutes, and the Spirit, Itself, will take over. If you need help with your lessons, that instruction will come forth very quickly, just as you have seen here in our work together that, when you have been stuck with a mathematical problem, instead of my working it out for you, we meditated. And then when you went back to your book, you found the answer as plainly stated there as if it had been written out especially for you.

So it is, if you have a problem in your studies or if there is some subject that you are not properly grasping, stop what you are doing for a moment, close your eyes, and realize God right here, closer to you than breathing. Wait for just a minute or two, and you will find that God, who is the divine Intelligence of your being, knows that you are coming to Him and what you are coming to Him for. Always remember that it is God's good pleasure to give you the answer. In fact, it is very much like a radio station: God is always talking to you; God is always revealing the answer to every problem, whether it concerns your lessons, your health, or your human relationships; but you cannot receive God's guidance, direction, protection, or support unless you are tuned in to accept it.

It is like you're sitting here in this room and receiving instruction in spiritual wisdom from me. But suppose that you have your ears closed and weren't listening, or suppose you were outside playing, or suppose you were downtown at the movies, how then could you receive that which I so willingly offer you? The answer is: You couldn't.

Now, as a human father, I would gladly give you every spiritual secret I have, just as readily as I would give you every dollar I have, if these would prove a blessing to you. But do you not see that I cannot give you any of these things unless you are receptive to them, unless you are giving back in return your attention, your gratitude, your love, and your obedience?

Just so it is with God. You must give God obedience, attention, lovingness—not by loving a God whom you cannot see, but by loving the boys and girls with whom you come in contact, and your teachers. Always remember, as you leave this home, that you are to express the same respect toward the boys and girls whom you meet as the mutual respect that you have witnessed taking place in this home. You know the love and respect there is between your mother and me and between you and me; and you know that, when your mother and I go out in to the world, we give this same love and this same respect to everyone we meet. That is the example you must follow and carry out into practice. And why? In order that you may receive God's grace because, even though God is present with you, you cannot receive God's grace unless love, joy, and respect fill your mind and your Soul.

Each one of us is responsible for himself. There is no God sitting in a sky, looking down upon you and judging your actions; but there is a God-center within you that knows everything you do and which brings back to you that which you send out. Therefore, the love and the respect that you send out are the love and respect that you get back, and not only that, but they are pressed down and running over.

Now even though you went out into the world and loved your neighbor as yourself and were humanly good in every way, this would not be enough, for that is only fulfilling the Ten Commandments, and what you are now being taught is how to fulfill the Sermon on the Mount.

The Infinite Way is really a revelation which says that you do not have to speak to God, but that you must have periods of the day or the night when you listen to God; and even though you may not hear a voice, remember that just by opening your ear to God and being silent for a minute or two you have permitted God to rush into that vacuum which you have created.

It operates like this: Close your eyes; put your feet on the floor; listen way down inside of yourself; and then remember that this day which lies ahead of you is now God-governed, God-protected, God-maintained, and God-sustained because you have consciously opened your consciousness to the presence and the government of God. Remember that, if you do not do this every morning, you go out into the world just as a human being, subject to all the trials and tribulations of the human world, and without divine guidance.

Actually at your age and with the teaching that you have had here in your home, you should be ready to have four periods a day—early in the morning, at noon, about dinner time, and before retiring—in which to take two minutes each time just to sit down and turn within and say, “Here I am, Father; speak Lord, Thy servant heareth. I am obedient to Thy will.” And then just be still for one minute. I can promise you that if you do that, your life in school will be a success, and even more than that, you will be laying the foundation for a completely God-governed life.

What the world does not always understand is that it is not too important whether or not you go through church rituals or church forms or ceremonies. A church can be helpful if you go to it with your mind open: It can be an opportunity for you to be quiet and hear the still small voice. Therefore, I say to you that if the boys in your school go to a church service, I would certainly suggest that you also go to the service—and remember, this is only a suggestion, for your life is free for you to make or to break—and if they go through a ritual, you go through it; if they go through forms of worship, you go through them. Because you are all united in that service in the name of God, it can do you a great deal of good, but the real good comes because you are there to acknowledge God’s grace and God’s glory.

The important thing that I want you to see, Sam, is that, in any instance and in every instance, at any moment of the day or night, God is instantly available to you merely by closing your eyes and inwardly listening. I’m trying to emphasize that it isn’t the statements you make, it isn’t talking to God, it isn’t asking God. None of that is necessary because the secret that I have learned is that God is infinite intelligence and He already knows our needs, even before we do. The way God fulfills our needs is through our inner listening—not through our talking, not through our saying words or thinking thoughts, because the Master said, “Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on... Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things... for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” Do you see that?

It is His good pleasure to give you the kingdom, and God does not even hold you in punishment for your sins. Even though you make a mistake, even though you commit a sin, if you are truly repentant in the sense that you realize that you have sinned and that it wasn’t right, in that instant you are forgiven. You do not carry around the penalty any longer than you carry around the obstinacy of believing you are right when you know in your heart and Soul you are wrong. Do you understand that? You cannot go around and do wrong and not acknowledge it to yourself and expect that you can receive God’s grace.

You receive God’s grace every time you acknowledge within yourself, “I know I’ve done wrong,” or perhaps, “I don’t know that I’ve done wrong, but if I have, wipe it out, because it wasn’t intentional. I never mean to do wrong, but always want to do unto others as I would have others do unto me.” In that way, you purify yourself. I have been healed of illnesses merely by asking God’s forgiveness for my sins; and of course, my sins are not major ones because you know that it is not our mode of living. But whatever it is—when we are guilty of holding people in criticism or condemnation, or when we are not loving enough or forgiving enough—we are sinning against the Holy Spirit. So it is a wholesome thing once in a while to go to God and say, “I realize that humanly I haven’t been perfect; therefore, forgive my sins, forgive my trespasses, and let’s start all over again.”

In this way, Sam, you will learn the greatest lesson that I have ever learned, and that is that the place whereon I stand is holy ground. God is right here where I am, and God is available the very minute that I stop talking and stop thinking and turn within in humility, acknowledging God’s grace, God’s power, God’s Spirit within me, and then relax for just a minute or two and let the Spirit take over. That really is all there is to the whole Infinite Way.

All the writings of the Infinite Way are only for the purpose of leading people to this revelation of God’s omnipresence and ever availability, without taking thought, without words, without anything except the humility to sit or stand or lie down, close the eyes and acknowledge, “I, of my own self, can do nothing. The Father within me doeth the works... Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth.” Then wait just one minute or two minutes before you get up and go about your task. If you learn to practice this four times a day as I suggest, it will not be long before you realize that your doing it many more than four times a day.

And now, just one thing more. Never forget that one of the greatest statements in the Bible is, “In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” This means that, when you awaken in the morning, your first thought has to be, “Thank you, Father, for this glorious day that is before me.” When you eat, you stop for that blink of the eyes, yourself is, “Happy days,” “Good appetite,” or whatever it is that you want to say with your lips, you mean with your Soul, “Thank you, God for setting this table.” Right?

So it is, that when you go out to play, blink your eyes and realize, “Thank you, Father, for Thy presence.” When you go swimming, when you participate in sports, when you do your homework, acknowledge God’s presence there, and then you won’t have to rely on your own ability because, if you do, I can tell you in advance that you will not be equal to it. I know because, alone, I am not equal to my job. If it were not for God’s grace at every step that I take, this work that you witness here could not be done.

Well, Sam, I don’t know that anyone could add anything to this, but if so, I’m sure that it will be done some day. I am going to have this typed for you so that I am giving you now, you can carve out for yourself a grand life of service to others, a blessing to yourself, and a joy to your parents, and the whole thing for the glory of God.

Always remember, God made you, and therefore any good thing you do is to the glory of God. Your parents brought you into this expression and are your human guardians, supporting, supplying and protecting you, and on the human plane, every good thing you do becomes a glory to your parents, something in which they can take pride. And so, you have your spiritual Father, in whom you should glory and to whom you should give glory, and you have your human parents, to whom you should give the opportunity to glory in your accomplishments.