

1953 First New York Closed Class
Joel Goldsmith
53A - Questions and Answers

Good Evening. Better had be!

Q. *I make peace and create evil. I, the Law do all these things.* In Genesis we read: *And God saw the light that it was good. And God divided the light from the darkness.* Then we have these passages that seem to bring out such similar ideas: *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity,* and so forth and so on: this idea of God creating good and evil.

A. To begin with the Bible must be read spiritually and not from a material or human or intellectual basis. To compare statements of the Bible with each other as if the words meant what they say, will only bring on a state of confusion. If carried far enough, I don't know why a person shouldn't jump out of a window. The Bible is a compilation of books brought into existence primarily by mystics, by individuals who have had some measure of God consciousness. They didn't write these things down because they had no pencil and paper. These great revelations went from one man to another man by means of speech. Rarely did any individual come across in his whole life time a single statement of truth, except it was someone already in the religious world. And these truths were meant to pass back and forth between men of religious vision.

In some times, truth was considered to be too serious, too dangerous for the average man. It wasn't considered wise to let the ordinary man or woman know about truth. I don't know what there was dangerous about it, except perhaps that when a person has the light of truth you can't control them anymore. You can't hold them in domination. You can't hold them in membership once they know truth.

However, these great revelations passed back and forth in the religious orders of the day always by word of mouth, and was only after hundreds, hundreds, hundreds, thousands of years that ultimately wisdom found its way onto stone and then onto manuscripts. As truth passed from man to man, we find it veiled. There is no such thing as truth in plain language. Truth cannot be uttered in plain language. Even our truth of today is mysterious to the people outside.

I'll give you just one sentence to show you how impossible it is to understand truth from the standpoint of language: Evil is unreal. Now go downstairs and tell that to the people in the lobby of this hotel. Evil is unreal. Nothing could be that fantastic, to the minister in the church, to the doctor in the hospital, to the guard in the insane asylum, to the general on a battlefield, to the diplomat in his particular sphere. Evil is unreal? How could you be so nonsensical?

Now, do we mean that evil is unreal, thinking of that sentence in terms of a dictionary? Do we mean that it doesn't exist? Do we mean that there is no such thing out there as sin, disease, cemeteries, wars? No. We have a special meaning for that sentence. "Evil is unreal," and we understand what we mean, and they never can until they come to the same state of consciousness in which we find ourselves; then the unreality of evil will be as clear to them as it is to us, but they must first come to that state of consciousness.

Oh yes, another thing: There are states and stages of consciousness of truth, and because of this, even we can misunderstand what we are talking about even among ourselves. And so, we very often are apt to say that there is only one power, and then say, "Be careful, if you sin you'll be punished." Now where does that come from if there is only one power, what is the punishing

power? And if there is only one power, whence comes the capacity to sin? Ah, now were talking in mixed language again.

So it is in scripture. In the Old Testament you have a God of good, God of power, and you have a God of evil. You have a God that does beautifully for the Hebrews when they're in battle. But oh! Just look what that same God does to the enemy. As a result of that, we today in a so-called Christian world, accept that same God and believe that God is on the side of the allies, but just look what God is going to do to our enemies. The same God that is protecting, let us say, the Catholics and Protestants and Jews on our side, just look what it's going to do to the Catholics, Jews and Protestants on the other side. Why? They have just as many priests, rabbis, and ministers praying for them, just as convinced that they are in the right, and sometimes they are, and yet we believe they're going to be punished, but we are going to be protected. In other words, all of this comes from a misapprehension of what God is.

Now then, when Moses formulated the Ten Commandments, he also said, "*The Lord said, 'God said you should do this.'*" Do you really believe that God said, "*You shall not eat shellfish,*" or "*That you shall honor your father and mother?*" No, no. He was dealing with a type of thought that had to be controlled and couldn't be controlled; they didn't have large enough police departments, and probably they wouldn't even have been respectful of it, but they were respectful of, "And God said . . . and God commands." And so, because we had no iceless refrigerators in those days to keep and preserve shellfish, shellfish would quickly spoil, and so would the meat of pork. So it becomes necessary for Moses, speaking for God, to tell the people not to eat the meat of pork or not to eat shellfish.

Now as we read back in the life of the intellect, we find the Ten Commandments, or most of them, to be very human and certainly far less intelligent than rules that we would formulate today. Now the truth is this: The nature of God is fulfillment. The nature of God is good, and nothing can flow out from God but good. You can't believe that as you look out with your intellect upon this world. That is why Paul had the vision to say that *the natural man knoweth not the things of God*. Of course, the natural man is looking out and seeing just what we are seeing with the eyes, hearing with the ears. And so we can know nothing of the things of God, but once you catch a glimpse of the Soul, of the Spirit of God, you will know one thing: The nature of God is fulfillment. *I am come that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly.*

The nature of God is fulfillment of good. Then the only evil that can ever take place is in the absence of God, but there is no absence of God since God is omnipresent. Then since that is true, there can only arise what we call a sense of absence from God, a sense of separation from God. Just as if we were to go blind and while this light is still in the room, we would not be aware of it. In other words we would have a sense of separation from the light, but the light would be here. Well, the Master used those same words, "*Do you have eyes and do not see?*" In other words the light was there and you have eyes to see with; do you not see? No, no, because we have become blinded. Only not physically blinded—spiritually blinded, so that we cannot see God or the things of God, nor could we know the things of God, because we have no longer spiritual discernment.

The nature of the sun is warmth and light. Can you imagine at any time under any circumstance anything emanating from the sun but warmth and light? No. And the nature of the sun is to shine. Can you imagine the sun then, withholding any of its nature, light, and warmth? No. Supposing then, we are in darkness or cold. That suggests the absence of the sun or at least, our sense of separation from the sun. So it is with God. Any form of discord in our experience represents our sense of separation from God. God does not reward and God does not punish. God

is a state of eternal, infinite, harmonious being. God is an infinite state of good, forever expressing Itself in infinite form and variety as good. When we are not in conformity with that good, we attain a sense of separation from God or good, and we call that being punished, not being punished by God—being punished by our sense of separation from God.

Now, here we have true vision: *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil and canst not look on iniquity*. That actually is truth. I said the other night, “God knows nothing of humanity. God knows nothing of our sense of changing good and evil. God is.” God is not responsible for darkened human thought. We are responsible in the degree that we have wandered from the Father’s house, divine consciousness, to this sense of selfhood apart from God, this I that calls itself Joel when *I* really is God. Now as we return to the Father’s house and I give up the use of the word I, and always remember: God is living my life, never taking credit for the good that comes into my experience, always recognizing God as its source, never blaming God for any evil that comes into my experience, but recognizing it as my own sense of separation from good, in that degree do I return to that Father consciousness, and then I realize what I told you the other evening: I can never succeed and I can never fail. God is the only success there is. God is the only grace there is, and God cannot fail. As long as I have an I, though, I can believe that I can succeed, but if I do, I can also believe that under other circumstances I can fail. But doing away with the I and acknowledging God as my being, God remains the success, and nobody remains to fail. It requires the humility of the man Jesus in order to accomplish it. *I can of my own self do nothing. . . . My doctrine is not mine*, always the remembrance of the Father.

There too, in the three temptations: Why should Jesus demonstrate his supply? Where is God? And Jesus recognized that. Why should Jesus try to be successful? Where is God? Only God can supply us, therefore we have no right to work, mentally or spiritually, for supply. We have no right to succeed. Only God is the success of individual being, and we should learn to let the success flow as the activity of God, and then not be too proud of it.

Q. And this has to do with Genesis, giving us the fruit of the tree and all of our food, and there being no authority for killing any living thing, such as cattle for food. And of course, reminding us that Jesus fed loaves and fishes for the multitude.

A. There again, it’s a question of mixing up God the spirit and our human sense of good. There is no question about it that in divine Consciousness there is no such thing as the killing of anything. There is no such thing as the destruction of anything in God’s creation. That is why, as we rise high enough in consciousness we no longer look upon snakes as venomous, poisonous, destructive. We no longer come in contact with wild beasts. In the kingdom of God there is no such thing, nor is there any such thing on earth, except as we, in our sense of separation from God, have labeled these such. We have labeled these—that is the human world has. We have accepted that, and we find it so to be.

In the same way we have built up this sense of requiring meat and fish, and we have it so. It has nothing to do with God’s kingdom. God never ordained that we should eat meat. On the other hand, while we are in this sense of existence, we will appear to require it. That doesn’t mean that many, many, many people haven’t given up the use of meat and fared well. Oh, certainly, meat is not an absolute necessity even from the human standpoint because there are plenty of foods that have all of the qualities of meat, and in giving up meat, one would not give up any of those qualities that are supposed to be in or of meat, and therefore, even humanly, meat is not essential. More so, spiritually as people rise higher and higher in consciousness, they require less and less of meat and ultimately find themselves not using it at all, and not even being concerned about substituting the equivalent since there is a great mystery.

This has been covered in a Seattle Class in which the unfoldment came that consciousness embodies all food value, not food itself. Food is an effect, and food will have the effect upon us which we give it. That can be proven right here in this room by noting the people who are thin and eat the same food as those who are stout. The food that makes one thin makes another stout. The food that is food to one is poison to another. The food that is tasteful to one is distasteful to another. How can that be? How can the same piece of food be tasteful and distasteful? How can the same piece of food be fattening and not fattening. It isn't food that contains these qualities; it is our consciousness that contains these qualities and the food reflects whatever power we give to it. And so it is, meat is not an essential. We give to meat its power. No other food is essential. As a matter of fact, we could reduce the amount of food we eat to a capsule full and still derive the full amount of nourishment from it because it is our consciousness that has the nourishment, not the food. You can watch that if you experiment with it.

Q. When an individual who has passed from our presence comes to our remembrance the feeling of a glow of love surrounds us. What is the interpretation?

A. I don't know as there is any one thing that can be called an interpretation. I think it would be a matter of opinion or experience. There are times when an individual that has passed comes to our remembrance, and the significance may be that they have made themselves a part of our experience and are bringing love to us, protection, healing, harmony. It may well be that a glow is going out from us to that individual.

A subject arises here that we cannot take the time to discuss, and that is the nature of the experience after our passing. It is a subject that requires months and months even to talk about and years to experience. Those of you who have a Christian Science background will remember Mrs. Eddy's statement that good can flow to us from the departed. She must have written that from some personal experience. She says good can flow to us from the departed but not evil, so she must have spoken from some sense of personal experience. I have had the experience several times of the presence of those who, to our sense have departed, and always with a sense of love and a sense of protection and a sense of good presence. I have never had an evil experience that I am consciously aware of. And so I would say that, in answer to this, we should expect, since life is eternal, that no one has ever passed very far away from us, and for this reason, their presence is with us with the same degree of love and probably more even than before. That is how I would see it.

Q. If there is only one being, am I all that is being?

A. Well, certainly, if you are not referring to "I" as Joel. If you are thinking of *I* in the terms of God, certainly, *I* am all that is being. The moment you try, though, to say, "Am I, Joel, all that is being", you are immediately hoping to wipe out the rest of the family. That is not a possibility. *I*, God, am all that is being, and *I*, God, am being Joel and Mary and John and all the rest of those in the world. *I*, God, am the only being. *Is there any other being?*, says Isaiah. Oh, no! There is no other being. I am all, and before *Me*, besides *Me*, there is no other. That *I* is God, infinitely manifested as your being and mine, infinitely manifested as animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdom. That *I* is the only *I* that exists, and it appears universally as our individual being. The person, though, who says I am the only being, looks out here and wonders what to do with all the rest of the people, but they have this much enlightenment: If *I* were not the only being, you would not be benefiting from me. If *I* weren't your consciousness, you would not be benefiting from this truth. But if the *I* out there weren't my consciousness, we wouldn't be here together and aware of each other. God is aware of itself as infinite individuality—infinite individual being. God is the only being in this room and we individually are that being.

There again, words are so meaningless. You know what I've just said has absolutely no meaning at all if you read it from a dictionary meaning—none. Unless God has given you the grace to discern spiritually what I have said, it's contradictory and it's almost crazy. Like all spiritual truth it doesn't make sense to the natural man. The things of God cannot be known by the natural man. Unless you can spiritually *feel* the truth of this, it isn't truth to you because humanly it doesn't make sense. If it did, we would go out on the street corner and tell it to everybody, and by tomorrow, we'd have universal peace. But because the world hasn't got the soul faculties developed, they cannot comprehend or apprehend spiritual truth. Having eyes they see not. Having ears they hear not. And so it becomes necessary for us, in all of this teaching of scripture, to remember: Do not try to make it add up through human sense because always the Bible comes out two times two is five unless you have the divine grace to read it spiritually.

Q. Will you please explain pre-existent consciousness that one brings forth with them?

A. There again, we ought to have a class some time for very, very advanced students, and that would be interesting. There is only one consciousness and that one is God, and God never had a beginning, and since that consciousness is my consciousness, I never had a beginning. Since that consciousness is your consciousness, you never had a beginning, so you have been living since even before time began.

Now living, unfolding, must mean an unfolding consciousness of good. And so we live forever and forever and forever. How? On one plane of consciousness? No. It is an unfolding consciousness. We began as God, and we end as God, somewhere in between this sense of separation developed called the "prodigal experience" or "the fall of man." And so we go through countless births and deaths. Do we really ever get born or die? No, no, no. One day we rise so high above this human sense of things that we will see it as if we were looking down at a theater or motion picture watching things happen that never happened. Do you not see that when Nostradamus can see actual events hundreds of years ahead, that he must have been seeing with a consciousness looking down upon what we call time and space—a consciousness yet independent of time and space? Was it Tennyson who wrote that that article, the odyssey in the sky; the cargos in the sky—speaking of the airplanes when they weren't dreamed of, tells us even of carrying commerce in the skies, tells us of destruction being rained down from the skies in vehicles run by men? How do you think that could possibly have happened all those decades before the airplane was dreamed of? Why, he was seeing out of a consciousness not limited to time or space, and yet he was looking down on time and space, and he was seeing the past as well as the future. He was seeing the future as well as the past. What is the nature of prophecy? The individual who has a state of consciousness unlimited by time and space that just doesn't look out through two eyes, but rather closes those eyes and then consciousness sees into the past and into the future, and it looks upon this scene as if it were all happening now.

Isn't that how we get the stories of *Forty Leagues Under the Sea*, the story of the submarine; eighty days around the world in a time when such a thing could have only been a part of a fairy story; eighty days around the world? Now it's eighty hours. Don't you see that anyone who could, at that time, have said "Eighty days around the world" must have been looking out of a state of consciousness unlimited by time and space and seeing that which was past and that which was future.

Now then, just for a minute of practicality, supposing any of us at this moment of our advancing and progressive spiritual life should pass on, tonight, tomorrow. Do you think that we could awaken in the same spiritual darkness in which we found ourselves before we heard of truth? Oh no. How could you lose that which now is a part of your consciousness? And so you

would find that if there is such an experience as life beyond the grave, that it would be a progressive life, and that you would pick up just about where you are now and continue forward. And so, you would come into what would be called that experience on a more elevated spiritual stage than when you came into this. So there is no question that we must have been on the spiritual path before we came into this, or we would not be this far along, since so many others who came into this existence the same day, the same week, the same month, the same year that we did and under the same horoscope aren't here at all where we are. Even those born on the same day and in the same minute that we were born, with all the same influences of the sky, they are still out there finding hiding places from the next atomic bomb, sitting up at night worrying what is going to happen "in case," and so forth and so on.

Now then, to me it is evident that we came into this experience on a higher level of consciousness than many who have not yet come to a truth study. My conviction is that everyone who has come to truth study—and I mean remains in it for the unfoldment of God, rather than merely the demonstration of things—has come because of a divine grace that had prepared them for it, had prepared them for it even before they heard of it, so that when they heard of it, they all agree, "Oh yes! I know that. Oh, that I know is true!" How do they know it is true? These people out here don't know it's true. Even if the book were presented to them, they wouldn't know it's true, but you do. Something within you responds to it. That something is your readiness; your state of preparedness for the experience. And so, there must be that within us which responds and corresponds to spiritual truth, and I am sure of this: in the end every knee must bend. Every individual on the face of the globe, past, present, or future, must ultimately come to their awakening. The question is just when do they leave the material sense of existence for the beginning of spiritual wisdom? And then note their progress from generation to generation, and you will see that they will bring with them into each experience something from before. Just as our child prodigies bring music and mathematics and all these other things with them; they certainly do not acquire them between birth and ten years of age. Oh no, we know that they are already a part of their consciousness when they come here. That shows the degree of their development, which they bring with them.

Q. Some metaphysical studies teach that certain organized religions create so powerful a suggestion of enmity toward the metaphysician that he must do certain protective work against it. There seems to be no place in *The Infinite Way* for this fear or need of protection. Is this correct?

A. In *The Infinite Way* there is only one protective work, and that is the realization of God as individual being, and the understanding that anything appearing contrary to the nature of God is appearance, suggestion, temptation, and is not evil. That is the answer. There is no such thing in all this world as an evil power. Nowhere did God create evil. The nature of God is fulfillment; the nature of God is good. God being infinite nothing could emanate from God but good, so there is no evil power. Now the only evil that can come into our experience is our acceptance of a world belief.

All right, there is a world belief that sitting in a draft will give you a cold, and so you can catch cold as long as that belief remains uncorrected, undiscovered in your thought. There is a world belief that there are certain germs carrying infectious or contagious diseases, and you may be assured of this: that, to the thought that can accept that, it is true, and so we do have infectious and contagious diseases. But do the infectious or contagious affect the metaphysician who has learned that God is the substance of all form, that God is the principle of all existence, that God

is the only law, cause, or substance or reality or activity? No. As a matter of fact, the metaphysician heals infectious and contagious diseases. He doesn't become a victim of them. He heals them. How? In only one way: knowing the truth.

Now then, if knowing the truth will stop infection and contagion—is there such a thing as infection and contagion? No, no, but we can be affected by infection and contagion in proportion to our acceptance of germs as destructive, just as we can be bitten by venomous snakes or hurt by wild beasts as long as we can accept a destructive force in snakes, reptiles, or wild beasts. What happens though, the moment that you realize the nature of God as individual being, then you come in contact with the snake of God's creating, and you will find there is no destruction in it. And you come in contact with the lion of God's creating, and you'll find the lamb does lie down with the lion. Why not? Why not? What's wrong with a lion? God created the lion. We may not have attained the state of consciousness that would enable us to step into the den of lions at this moment, but we have that state of consciousness that if we were thrown in, there isn't anyone in this room that would be harmed by it—no one—because in that moment the realization would come: God is. Maybe you wouldn't even have to think of two words, you just think of "Is," and you may not think of that one, you may think of "God" because you're more familiar with it. But whether you thought "God" or whether you thought "Is," either one would bring the lion to you to play with. Oh, there is no question about that—no question about that. We have too many books on the subject, and I personally had the pleasure of seeing a moving picture of one of our famous hunters hunting and taking moving pictures of the lion, and the whole family of them, the young, so close to them that he was standing on the guard there on the front of a Ford car taking a photograph of them. That's how close he was to them while they were feeding right with their young, and they never bothered him. Occasionally, they looked right up at him and into the camera, but they never bothered him. He had no revolver with him. He had no rifle with him. He had learned within his own being of the true nature of God as individual being, even appearing as a lion.

Now then, we have too many testimonies of holdups, burglaries, one thing and another, where the individual realized the presence of God and found no harm. And so it is, everyone has had this experience. You can only be destroyed by that which you fear. The thing you fear usually comes upon you.

Now, here we come to one of the mistakes of early metaphysics. In the early days of metaphysics, it was thought that the human mind had power, that the human mind that could do good could also do evil. It was believed that the human mind could injure one another. In other words, just like God was given the wrong sense of power in the Bible, so the human mind was given the wrong sense of power in early metaphysics. And so began this thing of protective work against the thoughts of others. Now if you want to know just how nonsensical it is in truth, remember that this protective work from others' thoughts began by protecting oneself from the thoughts of only one religious organization. But now let's see what happens. At the present time we find these same people protecting themselves from Roman Catholics, from Jews, from Orientals, and even from members of their own church who've been excommunicated or who aren't authorized.

Now then the question comes who do we not protect ourselves from? Not even our friends because if you didn't go through with the right teacher, you have to be protected from them also. Now let us see where this begins and where this ends. The human mind, as such, must either be a power for good or evil or it must not be a power for good or evil. And if it is a power for evil, it

cannot be a power for evil just through one race or religion or creed of people. It must just be a destructive force, period, and you must protect yourself from it.

The secret of all is this: The human mind is not power. The human mind is an avenue of awareness. Through the human mind, I can know that two times two are four, but with the human mind I cannot make it so, nor can I prevent it being so. With the human mind I can know that apples will come from an apple tree, peaches from a peach tree, but my knowing that will not make it so. And no amount of mental effort will prevent it being so. Never believe for a moment that by thinking you can make it so, or by thinking you can prevent its being so. You cannot heal a person with all the good thoughts that you can have from now until dooms day, and you cannot harm them with all the wrong thoughts that you could have from now until dooms day. The healing power is not in your good thoughts. If it were, can you ever imagine a parent losing a child? Can you imagine a child losing a parent? Why no, we'd all be going around thinking good thoughts for each other, and we'd all preserve ourselves here. Fantastic, fantastic! Why? You don't think for a minute that Mrs. Eddy ever would have been sick if good thoughts could have prevented it. Why, there are more people on earth that owe a debt of gratitude to Mrs. Eddy than you will ever be able to count up, and I'm sure that they all had good thoughts of love and gratitude for her. Nothing could have ever happened to her, if our good thoughts could have saved her. What are you talking about? There are too many millions of people on earth with a debt of gratitude to her and to Mrs. Fillmore and to Mr. Fillmore, too. You don't think that Mrs. Fillmore of Unity ever could have passed on if human good thoughts could have save her. Why, there are so many hundreds of thousands of people that owe their lives, their health, their supply to Mrs. Fillmore, just as they do to Mrs. Eddy, that the love in their hearts would have kept them here forever in good health and with millions of dollars. But, sadly enough, our good thoughts cannot do that for each other. There is one thing and only one way in which we can help each other, and that is in the degree of spiritual consciousness that we attain—if it were a matter of good thoughts, my heavens!

I would only like to call your attention to the national elections of 1932, 36, 40 and 44 and show you all the good thoughts that were on the Republican side. My, oh my, people from Maine to California were sitting up day and night doing mental work, and they didn't even come near winning. No! Human thoughts aren't power for good, and human thoughts aren't power for evil. No one can think that you're a bad person and make you so. No one can think that you're a thief and make you so. No one can think that you're immoral and make you so. They can only suffer from their wrong opinion of you, but they can't make you so. They can gossip. They can slander.

That's where Shakespeare made one of his mistakes. Remember it? "He who steals my purse steals trash, but he who filches from me my good name, robs me of that which not enriches him but makes me poor indeed." He was all wrong—all wrong. You go and take my good name away from me and it won't bother me one bit. My character will still be whatever it is no matter what you do with my name, and nothing you can do to my name will change me. They tried it with Jesus. They tried it with—Oh! what's the use of talking about how many they have tried to wreck their names and reputations and what happened? Even newspapers here in our modern times, you only have to remember what they did to Herbert Hoover and to Lindbergh. And where is Herbert Hoover and Lindbergh—on top of the heap. They didn't make them "poor indeed." They took their name away; they took their reputation away. They wrecked them. You would think that those two men were responsible for the fall of man. And what happened? They are among our most respected citizens today.

Don't ever believe for a minute that human wrong thinking is power. It isn't. There is a claim of it, and you can come under it the same as you can come under a claim of catching cold from sitting in a draft. There is a claim of it, and you can come under it the same as you can come under infectious and contagious diseases. It becomes necessary for you consciously to know the truth, the truth that will make you free.

You see, I'll show you an instance of where the human mind claims power in advertising and propaganda. The moment they throw out that mass suggestion, the first thing you know, you find yourself buying this kind of thing or that kind of thing, and probably not because of your own original thought about it. In the same way you can be mesmerized into actions that ordinarily you wouldn't support, but for this... but it isn't necessary. It is only that power through universal belief. You can free yourself of that by knowing that, I do not react to external influences. I react only to divine impulsion. Nothing from without can act upon me whether theory, belief, or law. Only God can act upon me, in me, through me, as me. Only God is power.

There we come back to idolatry. To believe that the human mind has power is idolatry. Isn't that a belief in a power apart from God? And so, just that one word "idolatry" should end the belief that sitting in a draft can give you a cold, that germs can give you disease, or that the human mind can influence you for good or evil. Just think of the word "idolatry" and know that if it exists as an effect, it isn't a power upon you. Only God is a power upon you.

Q. Can you say a few words about Christmas? Do you agree with Mrs. Eddy on this?

A. I have forgotten what Mrs. Eddy said except one statement about a feast of soul and a famine of sense, and of course, that statement is very true, but I don't know otherwise what her thoughts were on Christmas. But I'll tell you what my thought about Christmas is. It is an occasion. As a matter of fact, the copy has already gone in for my December Letter, and in it there is this word on Christmas, that Christmas is an occasion. It is a occasion, first of all, for the remembrance of the meaning of the Christ: the Christ born in our consciousness, and it is another occasion. It is an opportunity for love on what we call the human plane. It is an opportunity for the exchanging of gifts.

Now, because they say that Christmas has become commercialized doesn't mean that we have to commercialize Christmas. Probably to some it has been commercialized. One thing is certain; we can come under the mesmerism to the extent that where we would like to send dollar remembrance we buy a five dollar gift because we're a little bit afraid or ashamed of what might be said about us. We can overcome that ourselves and make Christmas a time for the remembrance of good, the remembrance of love, but within our own sense of it. So that if it is our sense of it to have a pretty little five cent card made, the five cent card will convey as much love as a dollar card, and in the same way the gift of a handkerchief or anything else will convey as much love as a diamond ring. It isn't a matter of value or amount; it is a matter this: that it becomes an opportunity for the expression of love that exists between us, a love which too often we fail to express at other times of the year. It has been said to send me my flowers while I can smell them, and I believe in that, and also send me my gifts while I can enjoy them, but for heavens sake, do not make it an excuse or an opportunity for showing off or for being extravagant or vulgar. No. Christmas can be and should be an occasion. As long as the Christian world accepts it as a remembrance of the Christ, then let us accept it as a remembrance of the Christ. We can do that without going to church services and we can do it going to church services if it will suit our family best. In the same way, giving of gifts, I believe, should be confined to those to whom we wish, at that moment, to convey some idea of our love.

Personally, I do not believe in being so absolute as to ignore Christmas or Easter or birthdays or any other occasion for showing each other how we feel for each other. That's how I feel about it.