

Unity's Five Basic Beliefs

by

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It is wonderful and empowering to know what you believe in! As is written in Psalms 19:7, "The decrees of the Lord are sure" (New Revised Standard translation). We know that God is certain and definite, and that, very simply, God knows what He is talking about. It is then appropriate that we, the Image and Likeness of God, strive to discover what it is that we believe in, so that we too can say what we mean and mean what we say. Proverbs 4:26 instructs each of us to "Keep straight the path of your feet, and all your ways will be sure."

To live the kind of life suggested here, it is important to know what the path is. We can do this as individuals by deciding what it is that we believe, and we do this as a religious movement in the same way.

The idea of stating what it is that a person or a religious movement believes is an important one, but can also be challenging to some. Some of us have come to Unity with the feeling that the religion that they had been in had too many rules and not enough freedom, and feel that any statement of belief can only lead to more of those rules. When a religion or other institution makes rules that persons must obey, rules that are not open to change or exception, those rules are called Dogma. On the other hand, when an institution creates a set of guidelines that are open to change and evolution as the people that participate in them grow and change, those guidelines are called Doctrines. Put differently, when rules come first and the people must obey, it is dogma. It is doctrine when the people come first and the teachings support their growth. People cannot grow freely with dogma, but they also cannot grow without the support that doctrine gives. As long as we keep to doctrine and avoid dogma, our religion and our participation in it will be healthy. Perhaps this is what Charles

Fillmore had in mind when he taught that "A statement setting forth the teaching of a religious institution is essential, but compelling clauses should be omitted" (Twelve Powers of Man, page 112).

We begin the formulation of doctrine in Unity by examining the words of Unity's founding thinkers: Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, and Doctor H. Emilie Cady. Through reviewing the wonderful works of these teachers, we can make a list of the basic teachings of Unity. It is good to know that the list that is written here is not the first one. Charles Fillmore made such a list in 1921, called "Unity's Statement of Faith." Some years later, Constance Fillmore-Bazzy, the great-granddaughter of Unity's cofounders, made another list of the basic teachings of Unity. In 1989, the Unity-Progressive Council was formed, with another statement of Unity's teachings, called "A Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith" as its guiding document. There are wonderful similarities and important differences running in and through all of these statements and the one that is written here, which speaks to the wonderful freedom of Unity.

Unity's Five Basic Beliefs can be understood in this way:

- 1.) God is Good, and God is All
- 2.) Humanity is Divine
- 3.) Mind is Primary and Causative
- 4.) Individuals are Free in Matters of Belief
- 5.) Jesus Christ is our Elder Brother, Master Teacher, and Wayshower

"Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Mark 12:29). The foundational statement of our religion, and the very meaning of the word Unity, is "There is only One Presence and One Power everywhere; God the Good Omnipotent." This means that Unity teaches that God is all-Powerful, all Good, and Everywhere Present. In other words, there is no place, event, person, or situation where God is not. And because we know God to be Good Itself, we believe that Good is the essence and truest nature of all that is.

"You are gods, children of the Most High, all of

you" (Psalm 82:6). If God is everywhere, God must be present in His creations. The Bible teaches us that we are made in the Image and after the Likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). Good is the real Truth about who and what we are! And all that God Is goes in to the making of His Image and Likeness -- Life, Love, Good, Truth, Wisdom, Power, and Freedom. And it is that last attribute, freedom, that gives us the wonderful ability to see more or less of God's Presence in our lives and in us. The more we choose to see God, the more we can accept His Gifts to us.

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds" (Romans 12:2). The freedom we have been given to see more or less of God does not just concern our perception. For, as God is the Creator of all, we are also endowed with the ability to create in our lives. Unity teaches that we create through the power of our thought. Unity's teaching that mind is primary and causative means that ideas come first, and when we open our mind to Divine Ideas, we create according to God's Perfect Will!

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Corinthians 3:17). Because each of us is a child of God, equally given the power to grow and create by looking to God within, we know that we cannot pray for or heal others. Whenever He presided over a miracle, Jesus Christ was always careful to teach that it was not He, but God that did the work, and that the faith of the individual is what heals them. We love to pray with others, knowing the Truth with them and supporting their spiritual growth, but we know that spirituality is between the individual and God. For this reason, Unity believes that all religions are valid and sacred, and upholds the freedom of the individual in matters of belief. While it is very true that Unity has its own path and practices, we believe that all other paths are important and holy. If God is everywhere, all roads must lead to Him!

"Any one who hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life" (John 5:24). To understand more about Unity's Christianity, it is

helpful to look at the meaning of some important words; Jesus, Christ, and Jesus Christ. We understand Jesus to be the name of the historical person Whose work and teachings we read about in the Gospels. The word Christ is not Jesus' last name, but is rather a description of the Divine nature of all God's creations. The Apostle Paul wrote about "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). Jesus taught about the Christ within us when He said "The one who believes in me will also do the works that I do, and greater works than these" (John 14:12), and when He referred to God as "Our Father" (Matthew 6:9). Jesus Christ is the phrase used to describe the perfect union of the natural person and their Divine Self, as demonstrated by Our Lord. Unity is Christian in that it follows the path and teachings of Jesus, Who taught about the Christ within all of us. This path leads us to the perfect union of us with that Divine Spark in us, exemplified by our Wayshower, Jesus Christ.

It is wonderful to know what we believe in! When we find something to stand for, we find it impossible to fall! Let us continue to keep the beliefs alive by keeping the dialogue, questioning, and growth alive, and let us keep the Truth alive in us by living it!

***Statements for the realization of the
One Presence and Power:***

God is God, and God is All!

I am a perfect child of God!

I think in terms of Divine Ideas, and I am healed!

I choose growth and blessings!

I behold the Christ in myself and in my world!

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Our Mission Statement:

Jesus Christ is the Head of this Ministry!

***The Unity Tract House exists to serve the Christ Truth
through carrying the word of Unity***

and the tradition set forth by Charles and Myrtle

Fillmore

into new expression everywhere!

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