

---

# Living the Life

## Course Three

In the Participating Membership Series



---

Dell deChant and R. Brent Elrod



# Living the Life

## Course Three

In the Participating Membership Series

---

by Dell deChant and R. Brent Elrod

U N I T Y  
P R O G R E S S I V E  
P R E S S

---

Living the Life  
Course Three  
In the Participating Membership Series

by Dell deChant and R. Brent Elrod

Published by Unity-Progressive Press  
2465 Nursery Road  
Clearwater, FL 33764

November, 1993  
Revised June 2012  
Edited for reprinting by Leddy Hammock, 2017

Permission to reproduce or quote from this publication is hereby granted. Please notify the publisher of intent to reproduce, and observe normal rules for quotations and citations. Additional copies of this publication can be purchased from the publisher

## Foreword

What does it mean to be a Truth student in Unity? How does life for the Truth student differ from the life of a member of another Christian church or from the life of any other citizen of our society? We know that Unity is more than just "positive thinking," although we certainly teach positive thinking in our own unique way. We know that we pray differently than those of other faiths. We know we believe that God wills Her children health, peace, and prosperity. We know that our church experience may be different than that of other faiths. Unity is a unique expression of the Christian faith, and this book is designed to help Unity students understand the implications of being a Truth student; in essence, it describes how we in Unity practice our faith.

Unity students have always identified with the term "practical Christianity." This term means that ours is not a faith that clings to the hope that God may somehow make our lives better sometime in the distant future. We do not believe that life is a burden to be endured all the way to the bitter end. On the contrary, we believe that life is meant to be a joyous, loving, and beautiful experience! How do we attain this life of joy? We do this by learning and applying the teachings of our Master Teacher and Wayshower, Jesus Christ, as interpreted by the Fillmores and other Christian Idealists. Ours is a faith of practice and expression: by living a life of prayer and keeping our minds focused on the One Divine Mind, we bring God's bountiful good into expression in our lives.

# Preface

## *Living the Life: The Practical Application of Unity Teachings - Vol. III* *Welcome to Unity: An Introduction to Unity and its Teachings*

*Living the Life* is the third volume of the *Welcome to Unity* series - a three-volume collection of study guides introducing the Unity movement and its teachings. I am honored by the invitation of Unity-Progressive Press to share in the authorship of this text, and most pleased to collaborate with its co-author, a student of mine, Mr. Brent Elrod, C.I.

*Living the Life* is designed for use as either a supporting text book for use in classroom versions of “Living the Life” or as a primary text for students taking “Living the Life” through the extension program of The Unity-Progressive Theological Seminary. As a basic introduction to the practical application of Unity’s teachings, *Living the Life* can also serve as a primer for persons who are unfamiliar with Unity, and in this regard, it can be utilized as a general resource text for newcomers to Unity.

*Living the Life* is an affirmative book about a wonderful adventure, the most magnificent adventure that anyone can ever experience—the adventure of living as a spiritual being in a world where there is only One Presence and One Power: God, the Good Omnipotent. *Living the Life* is not a comprehensive text on the topic of its title and focus. Rather, it is an introduction, a prelude to the greater text, which is the reader’s spiritual life.

Although many Unity students may open *Living the Life* only after having studied *Unity and History* and *Unity’s Foundational Teachings*, like the other two, this volume can be read and studied on its own without previous exposure to the other volumes in the series. In fact, newcomers to Unity may like to begin their personal study of Unity’s teachings with *Living the Life*. Readers and students of *Living the Life* who have not studied *Unity and History* and *Unity’s Foundational Teachings* will probably find these texts to be good complements to *Living the Life*.

Persons who are already familiar with Unity's teachings and their practical application may find study of this book an exciting refresher course. As with the other volumes in the *Welcome to Unity* series, I have “gone back to the basics” and carefully reviewed the works of the Fillmores, H. Emilie Cady, and certain progressive texts of the movement to find supporting and enhancing passages on the various subjects covered here. I believe that these classical expressions of Unity’s teachings will not only enrich the reading experience of contemporary students in their study of the topics in this volume, but also serve to familiarize students with the writings of Unity’s greatest authors and teachers.

Our aim in this book is not to produce a “best seller,” but rather to fashion a book that will encourage persons in their desire to live the life of a Unity student and, more generally, to renew interest in the primary texts and teachings of the movement. I encourage readers of *Living the Life* to read and study Unity’s primary texts; upon these texts this book is based and upon these texts Unity is founded. A bibliography of Unity’s primary texts is located after the question helps section at the end of this volume. For convenience in reference, abbreviations for the books cited in this volume and others in the *Welcome to Unity* series precede the citation of each book in the bibliography.

*Living the Life* is divided into five chapters, each dealing with a topic of great significance to those who desire to become engaged in living the life of a Unity student:

1. Prayer
2. Healing
3. Prosperity
4. The Church Experience in Unity
5. Living the Spiritual Life

The content of the chapters has come from sermons and lecture notes on these topics, with the bulk of the material coming from the original presentation of the "Living the Life" course offered by The Rev. Leddy Hammock and me in the spring of 1991. Leddy’s lecture notes and textual citations are the basis for many parts of the text, and her participation in creating the “Living the Life” course was vital to the process that has resulted in this book.

I am grateful for the willingness of Brent Elrod, C.I., to assist in the composition of this book. Brent, who served as President of the Student Government of Unity-Progressive Theological Seminary at the time of the compilation of this book, was a member of the first class of students to complete "Living the Life" when Leddy and I taught it at Unity Church of Clearwater. I am also most appreciative of the numerous other Unity students who have completed “Living the Life” in the Participating Membership Program of the Unity-Progressive Council. Each of them has played a role in the creation of this book.

As you read and study *Living the Life*, you, too, become a Unity student, and join a multitude of others who have, since 1889, sought to learn and apply the principles of Truth and thus to discover the beauties and joys of living the life of the spiritual beings that they are. The Unity movement has always stressed education; and I am proud to be known as a Unity student as I continue to discover the refreshment and delight of living the life of the spiritual being that I am.

*Dell deChant - Director of Education, Unity-Progressive Council  
Associate Minister, Unity Church of Clearwater*

# Living the Life

## Chapter One – Prayer

The purpose of this chapter is to familiarize Unity followers with Unity's understanding of prayer, and the role of prayer in spiritual life. Topics to be covered include:

- (1) Key understandings of prayer;
- (2) How prayer relates to spiritual life and spiritual unfoldment of individuals; and
- (3) The practice of prayer for individuals.

Background material for this chapter comes from the works of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, H. Emilie Cady, Frances W. Foulks' *Effectual Prayer* (EP), and other Unity texts. Key elements that the student should know will be noted in the review at the end of this text.

As we begin this study of prayer and this entire text on "living the life," it is well for us to briefly reflect on several statements made by Unity's great teachers. Those who have already studied the text on "Unity's Foundational Teachings" will be familiar with some of these statements. Remember Cady's statement: "We have come to a place now where our search for Truth must no longer be for the rewards; it must no longer be our seeking a creed to follow, but it must be our living a life" (LT, p.10). Cady also tells us: "Every man [person] must take time daily for quiet meditation. **In daily meditation lies the secret of power**" (LT, p.11). Charles Fillmore notes: "A daily half hour of meditation will open up the mind to a consciousness of the inner One and will reveal many things that are hidden from the natural man [person]" (CH, p.15). As we reflect on these important statements, we can also gain much by remembering what Frances Foulks tells us about the practical dimension of our spiritual quest. Foulks writes: "If one would grow, one must live whatever message is given in the silence. Unless the message from the Father becomes a living, vital reality in the daily life, seeking the silence becomes a mere pastime, a pretense, and hinders growth instead of hastening it" (EP, p.111).

In this chapter on prayer and in this text on living the spiritual life, we are especially mindful of the importance of making our quest for and experience of Truth 'a living, vital reality in the daily life.' This is what Practical Christianity is about, and Unity is Practical Christianity.

## Key Understandings of Prayer

Prayer is defined in various ways. Even within a single religious tradition, understandings of prayer vary. Unity is no exception. As students review Unity literature on prayer and the work of Unity authors on the subject, they will find some apparent differences and inconsistencies between selected statements, assertions, and instructions regarding this all important activity. **As a practical guide to resolving questions of personal meaning, students are instructed always to seek guidance within—ask your inner Lord for guidance in understanding.**

**To discover Unity's teachings on prayer or any other subject, we suggest that students review the "Progressive Reaffirmation of Faith" (PRUF).** By all means, remember Cady's assertion: "The greater the truth to be expressed, the more simply can it (and should it) be clothed" (LT, p.71). Remember also **the primary source documents for Unity's teachings are the works of Cady and the Fillmores** (with the works of Charles Fillmore published during his lifetime being more accurate than those published after his transition).

## A General Definition of Prayer

What is perhaps most important to realize at the outset of this study is "that **prayer is communion between persons and God and this communion takes place in the innermost part of a person's being**" (PRUF statement #9). This is our primary definition of prayer. All other understandings of prayer are related to and based on this primary definition. "Prayer" serves as a general "covering" term (title) for those activities which bring us into communion with God (Divine Mind). In this way, we may understand the "prayer process" to involve a number of related activities. We will still best understand "prayer" as communion with God. To be even more precise, we might say that it is "conscious communion with God." This experience is something that individuals experience for themselves and within themselves. This is true prayer.

Charles Fillmore notes that mental attitudes such as faith, meditation, silence, and concentration enter into and form part of prayer (see ASP, p.11, also see *Unity*, May 1927). In *Jesus Christ Heals* (JCH), he cites denial, affirmation, and the silence as "forms of prayer" (JCH, p.70). In *Effectual Prayer*, Frances Foulks discusses concentration, meditation, the silence, the message, and living the life. Each of these elements is properly considered part of the prayer process. Each is important. Only those elements which bring us into conscious communion with God, however, are properly considered prayer.

## Other Understandings of Prayer

Students should also be familiar with statement ten in the PRUF: "We believe that **prayer is the primary basis of spiritual advance** and, hence, manifest material advance. We believe in the power of prayer to heal, prosper, and bless, unlimited by time, space, or past beliefs."

Charles Fillmore often discusses prayer in his writings. Regarding the importance of thanksgiving, he writes: "Instead of a supplication, prayer should be a jubilant thanksgiving. This method of prayer quickens the mind miraculously, and, like a mighty magnet, draws out the spiritual qualities that transform the whole man [person] when they are given expression in mind, body, and affairs.... Prayer is natural to man [persons], and it should be cultivated to round out character.... Prayer is the language of spirituality; when developed, it makes man [a person] master in the realm of creative ideas" (CH, p.76). Fillmore continues: "**Prayer is cumulative.** It accumulates spiritual substance, life, intelligence; it accumulates everything necessary to man's highest expression.... **God answers our prayers in ideas, thoughts, words; these are translated into the outer realms, in time and condition.** It is therefore important that we pray with understanding of the law [of mind action], important that we always give thanks that our prayers have been answered and fulfilled, regardless of appearances" (CH, p.78).

Coupled with this idea, is our aim to "pray without ceasing." This ideal, first articulated by the apostle Paul, means "that we should be persistent in prayer.... To acquire the mind that is always open to Spirit we must be persistent in prayer" (JCH, p.85). We also know that "it is possible for our prayers to receive an answer in the twinkling of an eye, instantaneously..."(Foulks, EP, p.16).

Rather than supplication, or begging of God, **prayer is best understood as affirmation**--a positive declaration of Truth. As Fillmore writes: "It is an affirmation of Truth that eternally exists, but which has not yet come into consciousness. It comes into consciousness not by supplication, but by affirmation" (RW, p.152). Fillmore also tells us that **prayer is "the most highly accelerated mind action known."** In other words, prayer "steps up mental action until man's [a person's] consciousness synchronizes with the Christ Mind" (RW, p.153). Further, "**we should not cease to pray to the Father in the name of Christ Jesus**" (JCH, p.84) because "Jesus represented the kingdom of the heavens, and we, His agents, take possession of that kingdom in His name and declare that we are vested with authority to bring spiritual forces to bear that will restore man [a person] to his [or her] primal perfection" (JCH, p.166).

Fillmore stresses the importance of daily prayer: "Time should be given to prayer and meditation daily. We cannot grow without them, and no man [person] who neglects them will successfully develop his [or her] spiritual powers" (JCH, p.125). It is something that occurs within: **"Prayer must be made within, in 'the secret place.'** The door must be closed on all thoughts and interests of the outer world" (RW, p.153). Cady echoes this idea in her Lessons: "Learn first how to commune alone with the Creator of the universe, who is all-companionship. When you are able to withdraw from the outside and be alone with Him, then sitting with others may be profitable to you and to them" (LT, p.105). Fillmore adds: "Silent prayer is more effective than audible, because by silent prayer the mind comes into closer touch with creative Spirit" (JCH, p.79).

Remember that **"prayer does not change God-it changes us"** (KTL, p.146). Remember also, "A prayer without desire in it is a fruitless prayer" (TP, p.4). "The good always exists in Divine Mind as ideas, and we bring it into manifestation through the prayer of faith, affirmation, praise and acknowledgment.... **It is necessary to pray believing that we have received because God is all that we desire"** (RW, p.153).

Finally: "We are the offspring of Spirit and can make conscious contact with it by turning our attention away from material things and thinking about Spirit. As we practice this kind of prayer our innate Spirit showers its life energies into our conscious mind and a great soul expansion follows. What we need to know above all is that there is a place within our soul where we can consciously meet God and receive a flood of new life into not only our mind but also our body. This understanding shows us that prayer is more than asking God for help in the physical world; it is in its highest sense the opening up in our soul of an innate umbilical cord that connects us with the Holy Mother, from whom we can receive a perpetual flow of life. This is the beginning of eternal life for both soul and body, the essential teaching of Jesus, which He demonstrated in overcoming death" (TP, pp.4-5).

### **How Prayer Relates to Spiritual Life and Spiritual Unfoldment**

From the foregoing it should be quite evident that prayer is of vital importance to the spiritual life and spiritual unfoldment of individuals. As noted above, "prayer is the primary basis of spiritual advance and, hence, manifest material advance. Through prayer we are healed, prospered, and blessed" (PRUF statement #10). Prayer is fundamental, first in rank, essential. By recognizing prayer as the primary basis of spiritual advance, we are reaffirming Charles Fillmore's

assertion of its vital importance: "Time should be given to prayer and meditation daily. We cannot grow without them, and no man [person] who neglects them will successfully develop his [or her] spiritual powers" (JCH, p.125).

Fillmore also notes that Jesus' recognition of the necessity of prayer is "the one thing that stands out prominently in [His] teachings" (JCH, p.69). We further note that: "The best way to establish unity with the Father-Mind is by prayer" (TP, p.177), and "it is the only way to cleanse and perfect the consciousness and thus permanently heal the body" (RW, p.152). Frances Foulks tells us, rightly so, that "all [of us] travel the path from self to God by way of prayer" (EP, p.vi).

Numerous other citations concerning the importance of prayer could be offered here. What is most important for us to recognize as we seek to live the life of Truth (rather than seeking rewards or creeds to follow [see LT, p.10]), is that **prayer is vital to the fulfillment of our existence. What is this fulfillment? Fillmore tells us in an interpretation of John's Gospel: "John explains that all existence is spiritual, that it comes to man [humankind] as a gift, and that Christ is its fulfillment"** (MJ, p.12). Christ, we know, is the divine self. The fulfillment of our existence, then, is the demonstration of the Christ—the manifestation of the divine perfection that abides in us as what we truly are. Said another way: "The object of man's [humankind's] existence is to bring forth in the race that which exists in God" (RW, p.65).

This ultimate aim and one true goal of life, is described in various ways in Unity. Cady tells us: "It is the purpose for which we came into the world—that we might grow step by step, as we are doing, to the place where we could bear to have the secret of His inner abiding revealed to us" (LT, p.99). Again: "The ultimate aim of every man [person] should be to come into the consciousness of an indwelling God..."(LT, p.15). And as Cady notes: "At the great heart of humanity there is a deep and awful homesickness that never has been and never can be satisfied with anything less than a clear, vivid consciousness of the indwelling presence of God, our Father" (LT, p.90). Fillmore also writes of this homesickness, and the necessity of returning to the Father's house. See, for example: CH, p.35; JCH, p.131; TT, p.35; TP, p.87.

**The Father's house is a synonym for the Christ consciousness** (see RW, p.72). **To return to this house, to fulfill our existence, to discover the Christ within, to find our divine identity, to find our unity with Divine Mind, and to achieve the goal of life itself (perfection), prayer is the key.** Prayer is the key; for prayer, as you know already, is the activity (and the condition) through which we enter into conscious communion with God. And more: "When we pray in spiritual understanding, [the] highest realm of man's [a person's] mind contacts universal

impersonal Mind; the very mind of God is joined to the mind of man" (CH, p.78). Again: "The best way to establish unity with the Father-Mind is by prayer" (TP, p.177). When the highest aim of prayer is achieved, the fulfillment of existence is experienced.

### **The Practice of Prayer**

Now that you have an understanding of what prayer is, and why it is so important to our "Living the Life," you are well on your way to making prayer a central (and daily) part of your existence. Still, there is more to do. We must actually begin praying, if we have not already done so. And if we have done so, we should make daily prayer an immediate goal. At this time many may ask, "how do I pray, how does one begin, how do I come to seek communion with God, this most highly accelerated mind action known?" Like a disciple of Jesus, many may be asking: "Teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1).

A disciple asked Jesus this question in Luke's Gospel. And Jesus responded by telling His followers what words to say in prayer. The words He gave are known to us as Our Lord's Prayer. **You can find an abbreviated version of this famous prayer in Luke 11:2-4 and a longer version in Matthew 6:9-13.** This is as fine a guide to prayer as has ever been offered. If you are not praying currently, you can begin your preparation for prayer by looking over these parts of the Bible, and then praying the prayer that Jesus gave to His disciples. You will also benefit from reading Jesus' introduction of the prayer in Matthew 6:5-8, and His additional comments on prayer in Luke 11:5-13. In Matthew, Jesus tells of the importance of going into 'the inner chamber' (within) to pray; in the Luke passages Jesus tells of the importance of persistence in prayer and the effectiveness of prayer. In Luke, we find the famous passage, "ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Luke 11:9).

For Unity students who ask to be instructed in prayer, we would direct them first to the Bible, and then to Unity texts on prayer. As noted above, prayer is an individual, inner experience. If you seriously desire to learn to pray, ask your inner Lord for guidance. Be open and receptive. Two excellent books on prayer are Charles and Cora Fillmore's *Teach Us to Pray* and Frances W. Foulks' *Effectual Prayer*. *Effectual Prayer* is probably the best primer for those who are seeking a direction on getting started. Students might also find the section on "prayer" in *The Revealing Word* quite helpful, as well as Cady's comments on the subject in *Lessons in Truth*. Most other books by the Fillmores contain commentary on prayer. From the many fine instructions that are

given in Unity's classic texts, the following elements can be put forward as central to the prayer process:

**1. God is to be recognized as Father-Mother.**

2. Oneness with God is to be acknowledged.

3. Prayer is to be made in "the secret place," and the door is to be closed on all thoughts and interests of the outer world.

4. In prayer, each person is to believe that he/she has received and give thanks.

5. The kingdom of God (the Father's house, the Christ consciousness, etc., see above) is to be desired above all things and sought first. Our desire for "loaves and fishes" may be made known; remembering they, too, are part of the kingdom.

6. The mind is to let go of every unforgiving thought. All seeming "trespasses" are to be forgiven (definite good given for seeming error).

7. One is to set a definite time for prayer and stick to it.

8. In preparation for prayer, one is to seek to cleanse the mind of outer thoughts and (again) engage in forgiveness. "Denial and Affirmation" is a wonderful way to cleanse the mind during the preparation period. Re-reading passages from Truth books or the Bible that have inspired you is also helpful in preparation.

9. Following your preparation period, you are to relax your body. You are to speak words to your body, its different parts and organs. "If any part of the body seems tense, [you might] speak quietly but firmly to it in these words, "relax, relax, relax, and rest in the Lord" (EP, p.45). There is no need to assume a special posture or physical position. Closing the eyes is usually helpful. Lying down might not be the best approach, since you might fall asleep. Sleep may be just what you need, and if so, you should sleep; prayer, however, is not sleeping. Prayer is communion with God, an accelerated mind action.

10. After you have relaxed the body, the actual experience of prayer can begin. This is best understood as "concentration." Foulks tells us: "The part of prayer called concentration is a process of stilling the unruly or irrelevant thoughts so that our mind may give all its attention to the one thing desired" (EP, p.63). In the period of concentration, we seek to eliminate those "pesky" thoughts about the outer world that seek to command our attention. In concentration, we focus on God, constantly (quietly but firmly) letting go of the outer thoughts and centering on the God-thoughts. It is usually quite helpful to have one or more good, clear statements of Truth available for use at this time. Formulate your own statements. Remember the Kingdom (the Father's

house). Seek to concentrate on these statements and remind yourself that you are engaging in prayer, not "mortal thinking."

11. Concentration opens up to meditation. "Concentration may be likened to chewing food, preparing it; meditation to digesting it, using it" (EP, p.78). "In true meditation one becomes joined with the Giver, contact is made with the Source of all good.... One holy thought meditated upon becomes a mighty magnet and draws to it other holy thoughts, which in their unity become so powerful that all...[limitations]...are swept before them. In meditation, the aim of concentration is fulfilled. The holy thought(s) on which we have concentrated become all we know, all we are. In deep meditation, the intellect retires, reasoning ceases, the emotions are stilled, the body forgotten.... It is but a step from this high attention to the one Presence and Power in the universe to the silence, the home of the soul; only a step into a four-dimensional or spiritual world where there is neither time nor space, personality nor place, where one waits for naught but for God to make Himself known" (EP, p.81).

12. **Meditation gives way to the silence.** Review Cady's lesson, "*Finding the Secret Place*," especially those sections which concern the silence. "The silence is not inertia, not a drifting into something we know not about" (EP, p.86). "It is a passive, but a definite waiting upon God" (LT, p.105). "There must be a sort of relaxed passivity and yet an active taking it by faith. Shall I call it active passivity?" (LT, p.111). "Do not be discouraged if you do not at once get conscious results in this silent sitting. Every moment that you wait, Spirit is working to make you a new creature in Christ...." (LT, p.112). Remember, **you are waiting upon God** (LT, p.113), and your expectation is from Him (LT, p.114).

13. The message you receive in prayer and the experience you have in prayer is unique to you. Whatever it is, **be sure to give thanks to God for the experience.** Remember that what you have done has made a difference in your life, it has brought you closer to the goal of existence. "Whether we have consciously received a message in our silence, it has nevertheless been given to us. We never turn Godward, open to receive, but that the need in our mind draws forth from the Father a fulfillment of it in the highest form in which we are capable of receiving it" (EP, p.119).

14. **At the close of your prayer time you will find it helpful to return gently to awareness of the world around you, giving thanks for the experience.** As you go forth from your prayer experience, seek to take with you the consciousness you found through prayer. This is the beginning of LIVING THE LIFE!

# Living the Life

## Chapter Two

### Healing

The purpose of this chapter is to familiarize Unity followers with Unity's understanding of healing and its importance in the spiritual life. This chapter will focus on some of the basic Unity teachings on this topic. Key elements that would be helpful for the student to know will be noted at the end of this text.

Those students who have studied the Welcome to Unity text on "Unity and History" know that Unity began as a healing movement. Inspired by Myrtle Fillmore's healing, Charles and Myrtle established the Society of Silent Help, a prayer ministry that is now called Silent Unity. In fact, the workers in the Society for Silent Help were initially called "healers," but in order to avoid confusion as to the true source of the healing, the title "healers" was later dropped. The Fillmores wanted it clearly stated that "man is not a healer, God is the only healer." A wealth of writings on healing exists in the Unity literature. In fact, the first book Charles Fillmore wrote emerged from a series of lessons entitled "Christian Healing." We suggest that students review the works of the Fillmores, especially *Jesus Christ Heals*, *Christian Healing*, and *Atom-Smashing Power of Mind* by Charles Fillmore, and Myrtle Fillmore's *How I Found Health*. A sampling of Charles Fillmore's statements and assertions on healing are noted below under various headings. In addition, consult the "Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith" (PRUF) for concise statements regarding this all-important topic.

#### Health as Natural

In Unity, perfect health is recognized as our natural state. We need look only to our Way Shower, Jesus Christ, for clear proof of this belief. Charles Fillmore writes: "Jesus showed by His life and teachings that **it is the will of God for men [humanity] to be well**. A clear understanding of this is necessary if one wants to demonstrate health. Where there is a belief that God wills sickness and suffering, His love and power are shut out of consciousness" (ASP, p.76). "It is found by those who have faith in the power of God that the prayer for health is the most quickly answered.

The reason for this is that the natural laws that create and sustain the body are really divine laws, and when man [a person] silently asks for the intervention of God in restoring health, he [or she] is calling into action the natural forces of his being..." (JCH, p.80). Fillmore stresses this powerful Truth:

God is the health of His people. Man [a person] recognizes that health is fundamental in Being and that health is his [or her] own divine birthright. It is the orderly state of existence, but man [humanity] must learn to use the knowledge of this truth to sustain the consciousness of health. Health is from the Anglo-Saxon word meaning "whole," "hale," "well." The one who uses the word really implies that he [or she] has an understanding of the law of the perfect harmony of Being. Health is the normal condition of man [humanity] and of all creation. We find that there is an omnipresent principle of health pervading all things. **Health, real health, is from within and does not have to be manufactured in the without. Health is the very essence of Being.** It is as universal and enduring as God. (JCH, pp.23-24)

One is reminded of Myrtle Fillmore discovering this natural Truth when she heard the statement: "I am a child of God, and therefore I do not inherit sickness." She took this powerful Truth to heart and experienced a marvelous healing.

Charles Fillmore continues: "To be healthy is natural.... To heal then is to bring forth the perfect Christ man that exists within each of us" (JCH, p.9). He adds: "We know that health is the normal condition of man [a person] and that it is a condition true to his real being..." (TT, p.143). When seeming appearances to the perfect health state arise, Fillmore suggests the following: "A good healing drill is to deny the mental cause first, then the physical appearance. The mental condition should first be healed. Then the secondary state, which it has produced in the body, must be wiped out and the perfect state affirmed" (JCH, p.37). "If you deny disease as devoid of reality and affirm health as spiritual and abiding, then Spirit will bear witness with your spirit and you will demonstrate health" (TP, p.131). Fillmore also suggests "letting go" and "letting God" accomplish healing. He writes: "It is wonderful how quickly our bodies respond to a thought of life and health, how we can feel a flow of health instantly if we hold the right thought.... Disease is not natural. We must let it go, relax, and let Spirit carry on its perfect work in us.... Those who have had divine healings tell us that their best work was done by simply letting go and realizing that there is but one universal Mind and that this Mind makes a perfect body for every man

[person]...(KTL, p.22). As we recognize "that our bodies are spiritual and nothing else" (KTL, p.22), we can expect perfect health to be outpictured as the natural state of our body temples.

### **The Body as the Temple of God**

We in Unity believe the physical body is the Temple of God, and thus, inherently perfect. Charles Fillmore asserts: "The religions of every race have taught this perfection of the body but usually assumed that it was to be given to God's elect [or chosen] in some heavenly place after death" (JCH, p.184). This view differs from Unity in that we accept and affirm the perfection of the body for all persons now and forever. Fillmore states that our perfect example is:

"Jesus.... incarnated as demonstrator of the perfection and immortality of man's [a person's] body.... If God is Spirit and He dwells in man's [a person's] body, that body must have within it certain spiritual principles. Here modern science comes to the rescue of primitive Christianity, telling us that the atoms that compose the cells of our body have within them electrical units that, released, can change the whole character of the organism. Jesus... knew before the Crucifixion that He could thus make His body unkillable; which He did.... Our physical bodies are carried in our minds as thought and they obediently reflect every mental attitude" (JCH,p.184).

Charles Fillmore continued:

"When in the course of our evolution we discern that an all-wise Creator must have designed perfection for all His creation and we begin to affirm that perfection, then the transformation from the natural to the spiritual body begins, and it continues until our body is wholly regenerated and appears objectively in its divine perfection" (JCH, pp.185-186). "The fact is that we have reached a point in race evolution where we are forced to give attention to the refinement of the body. **Our religion has too long taught that the body is dust and ashes and that it is its destiny to die and be left to the worms. The deterioration of the body cells must be arrested and a new and more powerful life force injected into the physical organism. This is plainly part of the teaching of Jesus**" (ASP, p.66).

## Healing as Baptism of the Word

Jesus also taught that mind is primary and causative, showing us that the power of the mind to direct thoughts and words to effect healing is invincible. Charles Fillmore writes of the necessary role our speech and thoughts play in accomplishing all healing. He states: "A prayer treatment by an experienced spiritual healer is a baptism, with power proportioned to the spiritual understanding of the healer. The lowest method is by the laying on of hands and prayer. **The highest is realizing the Holy Spirit presence and its expression through the power of the word**" (ASP, p.67). He continues: "To think intently about life is to quicken it into action. To talk about energy, force, power, life, will make the life currents flow swiftly through the whole being" (KTL, p.161).

Fillmore speaks of his own healings, stressing the importance of denials and affirmations. "Experience proves the power of words to bring health. In healing myself, I talk to my body, repeating necessary denials and affirmations. This raises my consciousness to spiritual reality where all healing power originates" (KTL, p.174). **"Every time we speak, we cause the atoms of the body to tremble and change their places. Thus every word brings forth after its kind"** (CH, p.66).

As we speak to our bodies, so do they respond—sometimes to the amazement of those who are quick to discount spiritual healings. Responding to such naysayers, Fillmore states: "Spiritual healing is so marvelous and so far beyond the range of human explanation that it may appear to be supernatural. We cannot explain it clearly, but this we know: When we attain oneness with the invisible force that moves the mind, a new and higher energy sweeps through us; the thought is ablaze, and even our spoken words seem alive" (MJ, p.54).

## Healing Through Right Understanding

In Unity, we accept and bless the assistance of medical science and the medical community in our healings. We recognize, however, that "it is the work of the true healer to instruct the patient, to show cause and remedy from the viewpoint of spiritual understanding. All other methods are temporary" (CH, p.113). In *Mysteries of John*, Fillmore states: "The true healer is always the teacher and instructs his [or her] patients how to open the door to the 'good shepherd,' the divine I AM" (MJ, p.100). In other words, **the work of the "true healer" is to teach Truth.** We heal by teaching and teach by healing.

## Healing as Scientific Process

Charles Fillmore also speaks of the science of healing in his writings. He writes: "There is a restorative law that, if taken advantage of, will heal the world of all its ills... God is the law and nature is the servant of mind, and when lawful thoughts are enthroned in consciousness, nature restores the natural harmony existing between spirit, soul, and body" (ASP, p.127). Fillmore continues that "it is much more satisfying to logical minds to know that God is the law and that the Spirit that we have thought of as projection of Him is in fact He Himself in His own spiritual identity" (ASP, p.127). **"When the use of right thoughts and words is understood, nature's work is so easily accomplished** that the intellectual man [person] is nonplused.... **The first step of all spiritual healing is faith, and the next is receptivity"** (TP, pp.152-3). Fillmore continues: "It is a striking fact that even back in the time of Moses the health of the people was considered of great importance and was always mentioned in connection with their spiritual welfare.... Faith in God as the health of His people and obedience to the law of Being brings health" (JCH, p.53).

## Healing through Jesus Christ

As noted in the preceding section on "Health as Natural," we need only look to the life and teachings of Jesus for support for our claim to perfect health. In *Jesus Christ Heals*, Charles Fillmore discusses the primary importance of Jesus, stating:

Jesus promised that He would unite with the Holy Spirit in helping those who called upon Him. Unity healers have found that this promise is fulfilled when they concentrate in prayer and positive affirmation on the presence of the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ. A new and strong contact is felt with spiritual life. when the name Jehovah God or Jehova-rapha ("The Lord that healeth thee") is spoken silently and audibly; then the ethers quicken with the name and shower spiritual life on both patient and healer. The word Jehovah or Yahweh is charged with spiritual power far above and beyond any other word in human language. (JCH, p.155)

**The religious principles taught and demonstrated by Jesus were not originated by Him, nor did He claim them as a "discovery."** He said that Moses wrote of Him, and He often

quoted Moses, but with an emphasis on personal experience. Jesus told His listeners that they studied the scriptures expecting to attain eternal life through these sacred words, yet that the only way to attain that life was through Him... (ASP, pp.156-7)

Charles Fillmore continues: "Jesus emphasized the spiritual man [person], the I AM in man [humanity], as the only way by which man [a person] can enter the kingdom of God.... **Any declaration man [a person] may make in which the name Jesus Christ is used reverently will contact the spiritual ether in which the Christ I AM lives and will open the mind and body to the inflow of spiritual healing rays**" (ASP, pp.156-7). **This is the universal formula for healing.** We reaffirm this teaching in the PRUF document: "We believe in Jesus Christ, the Child of God made manifest in Jesus of Nazareth, the embodiment of all divine ideas, Who overcame death, and Who is now with us as the Way Shower in regeneration and full spiritual life" (PRUF, statement #13).

Fillmore noted: "Remember that **the object of all treatment is to raise the mind to the Christ consciousness, through which all true healing is accomplished**" (TP, p.178).

### **Instantaneous Healing**

It would seem that the majority of persons would tend to favor a quick and speedy healing when presented with the appearance of a health challenge. Instantaneous healing is attainable. **In fact, all of the healings of Jesus were instantaneous in nature, though faith and openness were already present in those He healed.** Charles Fillmore advanced this teaching. He stated: "When faith is sufficiently strong to dissolve all adverse conditions and to open the mind fully to the power of God, healing is instantaneous..."(JCH, p.56). Further, "The body is wonderfully obedient to the I AM mind, and hastens to do its bidding, and is renewed and transformed by a thought" (TT, p.119).

### **Healing Through Faith, Receptivity, and Persistence**

There are times, however, when instantaneous healing seems not to be the result. This should not cause one to become sad or discouraged. We can still obtain the healings we seek, even before we come into the full consciousness of Spirit that Jesus exemplified. We are to begin, however, by strengthening our faith and receptivity. **Jesus "demanded faith on the part of those**

**whom He healed**, and with that faith as the point of mental and spiritual contact He released the latent energy in the atomic structures of His patients and they were restored to life and health" (ASP, p.11). "The first step in all spiritual healing is the using of faith, and the next step is to become open and receptive to the stream of healing life. Spiritual healing restores to perpetual health because it erases the error thought and cleanses the mind. **Through the exercise of faith and our word, our spiritual quality is fused into unity with the power of Christ and the healing is marvelously accomplished...**" (KTL, p.174).

Add to that assertion this emphatic reminder: "Whosoever....shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass; he shall have it.' Here in a nutshell Jesus has stated the law and its fulfillment. The one and only reason that we do not always succeed in our demonstrations is that we do not persist in our mental work. If we have never tested our faith in God and His mathematical laws, we must begin to discipline our minds and raise our thoughts to the point where they abandon the slow inertia of the natural man [person] for the speed and spring of the spiritual man [person]. This is accomplished by prayer, meditation, and the repetition of true words" (JCH, p.175-6).

Fillmore continues his discussion of the importance of faith and receptivity. "The law of spiritual healing involves full receptivity on the part of the one under treatment. God does not do things in us against our will, as will acts in both the conscious and subconscious realms of mind" (JCH, p.112). "Spiritual healing depends on faith, and there cannot be faith while the mind is holding thoughts directly opposed to the possibility of healing. It is therefore very necessary to dwell much on the love and power of God so that a steady, unwavering faith may be established" (ASP, p.76). "The reason some prayers are not answered is lack of proper adjustment of the mind of the one who prays to the omnipresent creative spiritual life. Jesus was the most successful demonstrator of prayer of whom we have any record, and He urged persistence in prayer. If at first you don't succeed, try, try again" (ASP, p.126).

In addition to faith, receptivity, and persistence, Charles Fillmore reminds us of the benefits thanksgiving, forgiveness, love, and peaceful prayer bring to the individual seeking a return to perfect health. As you review the excerpts below, make a mental note of the areas you could incorporate or improve upon in your daily life.

## Healing Through Joy and Praise

We have already discussed the power of thoughts and words to transform the body. Doing so joyfully and thankfully is similarly empowering. Fillmore cites the benefits of joy, happiness, laughter and song. He remarks: "Laugh your fears away.... That there is an intimate relation between happiness and health goes without question. When you feel good you sing either audibly or silently. Singing promotes health because it increases the circulation, and a good circulation is a sign and promoter of health" (JCH, pp.168-9).

He encourages us: **"You can praise a weak body into strength, a fearful heart into peace and trust, shattered nerves into poise and power.... Praising and giving thanks liberate the finer essence of soul and body when we center our attention upon Spirit"** (JCH, pp.137-8).

## Healing and Forgiveness

Along with faith, receptivity, and praise, forgiveness is equally necessary to insure a complete healing. Jesus always connected sin and sickness as cause and effect.... Jesus spoke of forgiving man's [a person's] sins in order to heal him [a person].... Forgiveness really means the giving up of something. When you forgive yourself, you cease doing the thing that you ought not to do.... All sin is first in the mind; and the forgiveness is a change of mind or repentance. Some mental attitude, some train of mental energy, must be transformed. We forgive sin in ourselves every time we resolve to think and act according to the divine law. The mind must change from a material to a spiritual base.... There is no reality in sin. If sin were real and enduring, like goodness and Truth, it could not be forgiven but would hold its victims forever. When we enter into the understanding of the real and the unreal, a great light dawns upon us and we see what Jesus meant when He said, **"The Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins."** The Son of man is that in us which discerns the difference between Truth and error. When we get this understanding, we are in a position to free our soul from sin and our body from disease, which is the effect of sin... (JCH, pp. 56-61)

Charles Fillmore emphasized this connection between forgiveness and perfect health by stating:

"Perfect health is natural, and the work of the spiritual healer is to restore this perfect health, which is innate and can be spoken into expression. Our ills are the results of our sins or failure to adjust our minds to Divine Mind. 'Man hath authority on earth

to forgive sins.' **When the sinning state of mind is forgiven and the right state of mind established, man [a person] is restored to his [or her] primal and natural wholeness" (JCH, p.5).**

In other words, perfect health is ours for the asking when we forgive and let go of error thoughts about ourselves and others and attune our minds to Divine Mind.

### **Healing as God's Love in Action**

Lest we concentrate too much on technique, Charles Fillmore cautions us not to “regard the Holy Spirit altogether as a restorative principle without feeling, sympathy, or love" (JCH, p.183). Instead, he encourages us to remember that **the Christian metaphysical name for the "restorative power of nature" is the Holy Spirit** and that the name implies, "the whole Spirit of God in action.... Holy Spirit is the love of Jehovah taking care of the human family, and love is always feminine. Love is the great harmonizer and healer, and whoever calls upon God as Holy Spirit for healing is [also] calling upon divine love" (JCH, p.182).

### **Healing Through Peaceful Prayer**

Underlying all of our efforts to effect healing, of course, is a glorifying prayer consciousness. Unity followers recognize the vital importance of prayer in living a spiritual life. A thorough discussion of prayer is presented in the first chapter in this text. Remember: "A daily prayer for wisdom and divine guidance in the conduct of one's affairs will restore peace and harmony to mind and body, and health must of necessity follow... JCH, p.168-9). Denials and affirmations are also part of the prayer process. Deny the appearance of mortal limitation and affirm perfect health, knowing **"steadfast affirmations of peace will harmonize the whole body structure and open the way to attainment of healthy conditions of mind and body....** Be at peace and your unity with God-Mind will bring you health and happiness" (JCH, p.176-7). **If prayer does not seem to bring immediate results, persist and the healing you desire will naturally follow.**

## No Incurable Disease

As noted above, "when the mind is healed of its sins the body will respond" (ASP, p.131). No other conditions are attached. No additional requirements are hidden in the fine print. Concentrate on healing one's consciousness and the body shall respond in quick fashion. Yet some of us lose sight of this Truth when we hear some health challenge described by the medical community as "terminal" or a name is given to some error condition in conversations among friends. In Truth, **Jesus taught that there are no incurable diseases**, and through His Resurrection that even death can be overcome. **"He was without fear of evil because He acknowledged only the power of the Highest, which is good"** (JC, p.61). Recognize this simple Truth and follow Jesus in the Regeneration.

## The Healing Work

Charles Fillmore spoke of the limitless potential of healing but also of the limits we sometimes set for ourselves. He stated:

"We should not lose sight of the fact that the completion of this glorified body that God has planned for us devolves on us. We must become conscious of God-Mind and cooperate with it in making His plan manifest in us. As Jesus said, 'My father worketh even now, and I work'... The promises of the power of Spirit to transform man [a person] from a mortal to an immortal state are producing a great company of spiritual-minded persons in the world today who work in the silence and speak but little about their heavenly experiences.... Although these spiritually quickened souls, often widely separated, may be working alone, they are bound together by the Holy Spirit, and the bond of brotherhood that unifies them is far more enduring than any human relationship. (JCH, pp.192-4).

As it was in the Fillmores' days, so does it continue today: "Men and women with no previous healing power have suddenly become healers of marvelous ability. **They do not claim to understand how the healing is done.** They know only that through the exercise of faith and their word the spiritual quality in them is fused into unity with the power of Christ and the work is marvelously accomplished" (TP, p.103). As you complete this chapter, we bless and welcome you in expressing the Christ by living the healing life!

# Living the Life

## Chapter Three

### Prosperity

The purpose of this chapter is to familiarize Unity students with Unity's teachings on prosperity and how to incorporate these teachings into a prosperous adventure in spiritual living. Supporting material in this chapter is drawn from various sources, including the “Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith” and the classic text on this topic, Charles Fillmore's *Prosperity*. (An in depth study of *Prosperity* was a required course in the Unity-Progressive Council's Certified Instructor Program.) Although there are many other fine texts on and many wonderful teachers of prosperity principles, herein, *Prosperity* is recognized as the foundational text on the topic, recommended to all students of Unity.

#### **Three Powerful Statements From “A Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith”**

For many persons just beginning their experience in Unity, our prosperity teachings are the most exciting and dynamic parts of our doctrine. Many persons are first exposed to Unity through our prosperity teachings. How thrilling it is to discover the Truth that God's good is for humanity and every individual is empowered with the God-given capacity to succeed in all areas of endeavor. As affirmed in the third statement of the “Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith”:

**We believe in the singular supremacy and eternity of Good. There is only one Presence and one Power everywhere: Good. We know this Good to be God.**  
We believe that full realization of Good is the one and only objective of humanity and of all things visible and invisible.

With this powerful assertion as our inspiration, we can begin our study of prosperity—one of the key components in truly living the life of a Unity student. Right now, we can know the Truth that God does indeed support, enrich, and supply us with every good thing that we desire to

live a fuller spiritual life. Dwelling on this powerful statement and claiming it as our own is the beginning of living the prosperous life.

For too long, the dogmas and doctrines of Christianity have contained teachings that commend poverty as a virtue and caution against the acquisition of wealth. In Unity, we do not condemn these dogmas and doctrines, but do affirm that Christians may freely express the will of God as prosperous persons. Indeed, we go further in our joyous assertion that poverty need not be understood as a virtue or wealth as a cause of concern. **Unity participants recognize that success, wealth, abundance, and every good thing (in all areas of endeavor) are the birthright of every person.** This recognition is the foundation of Unity's prosperity teachings.

We are neither flawed nor made to fail in any way. We are here to know and express more of God, more of Good. Remember, the twenty-first statement in the “Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith”:

**We believe that God's will for humanity is good and only good,** including, but not limited to, illumination, wholeness, prosperity, harmony, order, peace, and joy.

This next mighty assertion builds on the statement cited earlier. Together, these statements help us understand the profoundly spiritual basis of our prosperity teachings.

Does the spiritual basis of prosperity mean that prosperity is only a "spiritual" undertaking? True prosperity is truly a "spiritual" undertaking; but we want to remember that the truly spiritual necessarily includes a material expression. **Material success is, thus, a necessary consequence of spiritual success.** Do not be afraid to seize the understanding that your prosperity includes material success. Review your “Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith” for this illumining statement:

“We believe that prayer is the primary basis of spiritual advance and, hence, manifest material advance. We believe in the power of prayer to heal, prosper, and bless, unlimited by time, space, or past beliefs.”(“PRUF” number 10)

Notice our recognition of the power of prayer and the supportive relationship of spiritual advance to material advance. Material success is just as much a part of living the life as prayer, health, and harmonious service with others in a religious community. We are here to know and

demonstrate the Truth of Being. Elemental to that demonstration is material success. Be mindful, however, you are the one in charge of judging your material success. Let the Christ Mind guide you in your judgment of success, rather than the legion of outer guides who may have garnered their notions of success from the ways of material thinking and secular pursuits. Part of living the prosperous life is recognizing your dominion over your own world; this dominion begins with your thinking and it flowers through your use of your spiritual faculties. You are in charge of your thoughts: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Romans 12:2).

### **Four Primary Concepts**

Now that we have a good foundation for our survey of Unity's prosperity teachings, let us consider four topics necessary to a solid understanding of Unity's prosperity teachings:

- (1) Substance
- (2) Abundance and Generosity
- (3) Receiving
- (4) Giving and Tithing

Many of our supporting passages in this section are taken from Charles Fillmore's *Prosperity*. Again, we strongly encourage you to study this powerful text on your own. If you already have a copy, you may desire to follow along in the book as we share important ideas and some crucial quotations that enhance and vivify these ideas. As you find the passage in this text, refer to *Prosperity* and read further.

### **Substance**

Unity students recognize that a basic understanding of "substance" is necessary—not only to facilitate a better grasp of the principle of prosperity, but also to begin to comprehend the spiritual principles that govern the universe itself. The importance of having a right understanding of "substance" is revealed by Mr. Fillmore in his selection of substance as the topic for the first chapter in *Prosperity*. The title alone tells us much: "Spiritual Substance, the Fundamental Basis of the Universe."

Mr. Fillmore defines substance in various ways. As is often the case with words and terms used in Unity, *The Revealing Word* offered a good concise definition of substance, explaining that substance is:

“The divine idea of the underlying reality of all things. Substance is everywhere present, pervades all things and inspires to action. It underlies all manifestation and is the spiritual essence, the living energy out of which everything is made . It sustains and enriches any idea that is projected into it. Out of it [a person] forms whatever [he/she] will according to [his/her] faith and understanding” (RW, pp 186-187).

At this introductory level, what is important to know about substance is that it is the foundation for all manifestation ("the living energy out of which everything is made") and it responds to our thought. This explains why Mr. Fillmore begins his book on prosperity with a chapter on substance. Right here and now, we will want to begin thinking "substantially" about our world.

**The word substance is derived from the Latin *sub* + *stare* (to stand under). Substance is that which "stands under" everything.** It is sometimes called "**thought stuff**" and "**radiant clay**," thus indicating its responsiveness to our thought. When reflecting on why and how physical/material things come into manifestation through thinking, recognize that it is because of the capacity of thought to form and shape. That which is being formed and shaped through our thinking is **this omnipresent inexhaustible spiritual element, the "stuff" from which all material things are made—substance.** The practical application of the idea of substance was clearly summarized by Charles Fillmore when he wrote:

”Whoever you are and whatever your immediate need, you can demonstrate the law. If your thoughts are confused, become still and know. Be still and know that you are one with the substance and with the law of manifestation. Say with conviction I am strong, immovable Spirit substance” (P, p.23).

And further:

”Be still and turn within to the great source. See with the eye of faith that the whole world is filled with substance. See it falling all around you as snowflakes of gold and silver and affirm with assurance: Jesus Christ is now here raising me to His

consciousness of the omnipresent, all-providing God substance, and my prosperity is assured” (P, p.25).

We are reminded that substance is not matter or form, it is the spiritual essence that underlies all matter and form. That which we call matter is but the physical/material manifestation of substance. Let us also remember that "God is substance.... the intangible essence of that which [humanity] has formed into and named matter" (P, p.13). Finally, remember with Myrtle Fillmore that substance responds to your thoughts:

“The spiritual substance out of which visible wealth comes is never depleted. It is right with you all the time. It will respond to your faith in it. It will yield according to your demands on it. It is never affected by your ignorant talk about hard times, but you are affected because your ideas govern your demonstration” (HLG, p.146).

If you do not yet feel that you have gained a good understanding of the idea of substance at this point, do not be dismayed. Philosophers have been trying to define substance since the dawn of civilization. Its meaning is ultimately quite mystical, and it is an idea best encountered through prayer and meditation. As you continue to think about substance, seek a sense of the mystical and personal meaning of this **“radiant clay”** that you form and shape through your thinking. You might take this thought into meditation as you continue your individual encounter with the idea of substance:

“The rich substance of the kingdom of God is pouring its plenty perpetually into my mind and affairs, and I am in all ways prospered” (RW, p.187).

### **Abundance and Generosity**

**One of the most precious revelations of Truth students is the realization that we live in a universe of abundance.** Ours is not a world of lack and limitation, it is a world of plenty. Moreover, this is a generous world. Not only do we live in a universe of abundance, this abundance is forever being released to us according to our thoughts. **God's greatest gift to humanity is the power of thought (RW, p.82).** Mr. Fillmore wrote: "Plenty is here, all around, and when you have opened the eyes of Spirit in yourself, you will see it and rejoice" (P, p.177). And further:

**"The law of supply is a divine law . When you work in harmony with this universal law, every needed thing is abundantly supplied" (P, pp. 67-68).** Expect the law to work for you. Myrtle Fillmore stated: "You are to expect prosperity because you are keeping the law" (HLG, p.146).

From a spiritual standpoint, we know that working in harmony with the universal law of generosity means that we are first to recognize the abundance of the universe and our worthiness and willingness to receive our desired portion; then to claim our desired good through prayer, meditation, affirmation, and other spiritual activities that focus our consciousness on the present reality of good we desire; and finally and always (even in advance) giving thanks to God for the demonstration. God, after all, is the Principle behind the process. This formula outlined here is given in various ways in numerous Unity texts and countless passages:

- 1. Know that the universe is a kingdom of abundance and generosity.**
- 2. Know that you are worthy to receive your desired part of this abundance.**
- 3. Claim your desired good and know the universe will respond generously.**
- 4. Give thanks!**

Now, let us be practical. How often will you hear people say this, perhaps while dismissing your faith-claim about the abundance of the universe. You must know that your faith-claim is dauntless in its strength and you are courageous in your realization. And remember, you are a Christian Idealist, you are a student and practitioner of Practical Christianity. For you, nothing is more practical than the four-step process outlined above!

Each of the four steps above is necessary, and you will encounter them all in Unity's foundational and progressive texts on prosperity. **Of the four, the first is perhaps the most important one on which to focus full spiritual consideration and vigilant prayer attention.** Not only is it first in the process of demonstration of any desired good, it is the necessary first step in developing a permanent prosperity consciousness and an indelible tendency toward success in your life. Upon this understanding, the other steps rest. As Myrtle Fillmore taught: "The unfailing resource is always willing to give. It has no choice in the matter; it must give, for that is its nature" (HLG, p. 146). As Mr. Fillmore reminded us:

“Do not be fearful, regardless of how outer appearances may affect others. Keep your head when all about you are losing theirs. Refuse to load up your mind with

the old material thoughts of economy to the point of denial of what you really need. Eliminate old limiting ideas. Assert your freedom and your faith as a child of God” (P, p.170).

And again:

“In your mind see plenty everywhere. Yes, it is hard sometimes to overcome the thought that there is not enough, for it is an insidious thought that has been in consciousness for a long time. But it can be done. It has been done and is being done by others. The prosperity law is not a theory but a demonstrated fact, as thousands can testify. Now is the time to open your mind and to see plenty” (P, p.169).

Open your eyes as well. Myrtle Fillmore explained:

“You would not think of closing your eyes and walking around saying that you can't see and don't know where you are going. So why close your eye of omniscience by saying, ‘I do not know what to do?’ Repeatedly affirm that you do know! That is the way to make your wisdom work for you and guide you in paths of plenty” (HLG, p.141).

Open your mind and your eyes; now is the time indeed! Consider again the four steps:

1. Know that the universe is a kingdom of abundance and generosity.
2. Know that you are worthy to receive your desired part of this abundance.
3. Claim your desired good and know the universe is generously responding.
4. Give thanks!

With clarity of illuminated thought, know that the universe is a kingdom of abundance and generosity. With serene self-confidence and the gentle ease of your native greatness, know that you are worthy to receive your desired part of this unlimited abundance. With courageous conviction of your spiritual birth-right as child of the Most High, royal child of the Omnibenevolent Lord, claim your desired good and know the universe is sure to respond generously. Finally, do not forget to give thanks. As Myrtle Fillmore instructed:

”You are not to take your prosperity as a matter of fact. You are to be as deeply grateful for every demonstration as you would be for some unexpected treasure poured into your lap. You are to expect prosperity because you are keeping the law, and you are to give thanks for every blessing that you gain... When Jesus Christ had only a little supply from which to feed

a multitude, He gave thanks for what He had, and that little grew into such an abundance that all were satisfied” (HLG, p.146 – see also *Prosperity* by Charles Fillmore, p. 105).

## Receiving

For millennia, religions have put stress on the responsibility of persons to give. We have been taught to give our most treasured possessions and resources to claimed sources of unimaginable potency and awesome, awful power. Often the process of giving involves an institutional intermediary– a spiritual teacher, community, or expression. Among the gifts humankind has given have been harvested crops, the "first fruits," livestock, game taken in hunts, gold, precious herbs and spices, in some cultures, captured persons, slaves, even children, and, of course, in our contemporary society, money. Christianity has been especially keen in its celebration of the concept of giving, but it is hardly alone in this, and it is natural for humankind to affirm the importance of giving.

Where error can seem to creep in, however, is in the rationale for the giving and attitude of the giver. We will return to the concept of giving in our next section, on tithing. For now, let us note with due stress that giving is a necessary part of living the prosperous life and a vital component in the life of the Unity student. With equal or greater stress we also note that we do not give because of fear or from a desire to beg from God, or bargain and barter with Deity; we also do not give out of any sense of weakness or unworthiness. All that we have is God's, all that we are is God; spiritual giving is simply a natural-spiritual way of expressing our essential identity as spiritual beings, agents of Divinity, conscious participants in the divine plan. We will return to this topic, but we will talk about receiving first.

The apostle Paul's assertion, "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7), has become a virtual cliché, but it is true enough. **The corollary, "God loves a cheerful receiver," is equally true though seldom recognized.** With all due respect to Paul, let us know that receiving is also a virtue; and the cheerful receiver is loved by God just as much as the cheerful giver.

Another old cliché, also offered by Paul, "It is better to give than to receive," is attributed to Jesus by Paul in Acts 20:35, but there is no record of Jesus having said this in the canonical Gospels. A similar statement does appear in the Deuterocanonical (Apocryphal) book of Sirach, 4:31. Again, we appreciate this statement, and in Unity we offer the note that it is also good and expected that we receive the gifts that are given to us. God does love a cheerful giver, but God

seeks out cheerful receivers. Let us be cheerful in receiving and strive to be prepared to receive our good at every opportunity.

The adventure of living the life of a Unity student, and especially one who has mastered the principles of prosperity, requires both giving and receiving. We are considering receiving first, because it has proven to be the more challenging concept for many persons to accept. While this may seem curious at first, we ask our readers only to reflect on experiences in their own lives, when they have either been offered or offered to others gifts, money, and valuable or treasured possessions in the spirit of friendship, collegiality, or just because one "felt like it." How often persons reject such gifts. Yet, when we are offered money in exchange for our labor, or when offered something at specially designated times (e.g.: giving-holidays, birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, etc.) we will generally accept the money or gift.

As a culture, we have such a pronounced belief that what we receive must be earned, that we often find it quite difficult to receive anything that is freely given. In Unity we have a simple but profound expression: "**Accept your good!**" The universe is constantly giving to us; giving in an infinite multitude of ways, yet when we arrest the flow of good by refusing to accept what is given to us, we are denying both the natural tendency of the universe and our own worthiness as children of God. God is the great and limitless Giver. It is God's will to give to us, to see us prospered in all ways. God is constantly pouring forth blessings and it is our great opportunity—actually our responsibility—to receive these blessings. **And, just as a note, it is because of our greatest gift, the power of thought, that we are able to appropriate divine ideas—our inheritance as children of God and "the foundation and cause of all that man [humanity] desires" (CH, p.13).**

Charles Fillmore instructs in the right approach to overcoming the fear of receiving and cultivating a consciousness of receptivity to God's gifts. He wrote:

“ Determine to know God's will and do it. Affirm: **I am determined to achieve success through doing God's will. That sums up the whole law.** God is more willing to give than we are to receive. What we need to do is determine what is His will, what He is trying to give, and open ourselves to His bounty” (P, p.112).

A wonderful prosperity teacher, one of the great teachers in the early days of the Unity movement, Annie Rix Militz (1856-1924), gives excellent insight into the importance of Unity

students accepting their good. In a currently unpublished masterpiece, *Both Riches and Honor*, Militz writes these stirring words:

“Worldly riches have been feared, despised, condemned, and even hated by spiritual aspirants, because of ignorance of how to be in them and not of them, how to possess them and not be possessed by them. Doubtless, this attitude of repudiating and ignoring wealth is less deceiving than the other error; greed and worship of money and the fear of losing riches. But the really wise avoid both attitudes through knowing worldly wealth to be but a reflection of the real, the spiritual riches that must be sought first, last and always. Having found the riches of heaven, you cannot escape the riches of earth unless you purposely repudiate them” (BRH, pp. 5-6).

In Unity, we do not repudiate the riches of earth, because we seek the riches of heaven, God's divine ideas. In the Spirit of Truth, we joyously receive all the riches that are freely given to us and we say "no" only to limitation, lack, fear, and all other false concepts that hold us in bondage to matter and materiality.

### **Giving and Tithing**

We can now turn our attention to giving—the other part of the giving and receiving prosperity process. Students are encouraged to reread the opening paragraph of the previous subsection. As noted there, religions historically have stressed the necessity of giving. In Unity, we also recognize that giving is a vital part of living the life of a Truth student. Yet, we do not condone forced giving. When giving is a burden or the gift given out of sense of obligation or fear, the spirit of giving is not fully expressed. Rather than a gift, the item or symbol we release functions more like an expense payment, a fee, a tax, a fare, even a bribe. As Mr. Fillmore wrote: “**A gift with reservations is not a gift;** it is a bribe. There is no promise of increase unless we give freely, let go of the gift entirely, and recognize the universal scope of the law.” (P, p.143)

In learning about giving the “Unity way,” let us lift our understanding of spiritual giving and free it from any bondage to obligation, fear, or burden. Unity followers know that true prosperity is based on freedom and joyous love of both receiving and giving. True giving is never selfish; in fact it is something that we love to do. **When the true spirit of giving is grasped properly, the act of giving becomes a mystical expression of our oneness with God and our**

**affirmative response to and participation in the divine process of spiritual growth:** "True giving is the love and generosity of the Father's heart" (P, p.133). Such giving puts us in touch with the universal law of supply:

"The spiritual-minded [person] does not make selfish use of the law but gives because he [or she] loves to give. Because he [or she] gives with no thought of reward and no other motive than love, he [or she] is thrown more completely into the inevitable operation of the law and his [or her] return is all the more certain"(P, pp. 143-144).

How important it is to realize this. For this reason, **Unity centers often do not charge fees for classes or services;** they tend not to request "pledges;" and they put no obligations on members or participants. **Unity centers are supported through offerings freely given in support of the spiritual work of the centers. Known as the "love offering plan," this approach is deeply rooted in Unity tradition. Its origin is in the teaching of Unity's co-founder, Myrtle Fillmore. The love offering plan is the foundation for prosperity in Unity churches and religious communities. Based on free will, the love offering plan recognizes that Unity students will give according to their consciousness in recognition of the spiritual nourishment they have received.**

Giving is a vital part of spiritual life, and like all other aspects of living this life, the choice of giving is always free and always left to the consciousness of individuals. Does this mean that one does not have to give? Of course it does! No one can coerce you to give in a spiritual sense. As with prayer, spiritual treatment, denial and affirmation, and any other spiritual practice, spiritual giving is an individual endeavor. Truly the activity is between you and God. The choice to give must be yours, since spiritual giving is predicated on the individual choosing to share items and symbols of value.

If one is free to give, and the spiritual gift must always be freely given, why, then, do we teach the value of giving? Quite simply, it is because we recognize that genuine giving is part of the divine plan. It is confirmation of our willingness to put God first in all things: "The great promise of prosperity is that if [persons] seek God and His righteousness first then all shall be added to them" (P, p.141).

As we noted earlier, as God gives to us freely, we are to receive in the same spirit. Likewise, we, too, are to give; to share our good, and freely to offer to the agent(s) of our religious and spiritual nourishment a portion of our bounty. This approach assures us that we are in the flow of

life, and testifies to our affirmative participation in the divine plan. Giving is not required, but it is heartily recommended. As Mr. Fillmore directs: "Let us give as God gives, unreservedly, and with no thought of return, making no mental demands for recompense on those who have received from us" (P, pp.142-143).

The one best way—Unity's recommended method of giving—is known as tithing. **Tithing means "giving a tenth of one's supply to God and His work" (RW, p.195).** The Unity student knows that the tithe is not the limit on giving, but rather the starting point. As with all of Unity's foundational teachings, **tithing is Biblically based (see: Genesis 14:20, Numbers 18:24, 2 Chronicles 31:5, Hebrews 7:9, et al.).** Unity literature is replete with explications of the principle and process of tithing. Tithing is a very specific spiritual undertaking. It is both a mystical process and a practical method of living the spiritual life.

Not all giving is tithing; but all tithing is spiritual giving. Giving is wonderful, blessed, and an activator of God's love ("God loves a cheerful giver" [2 Cor. 9:7]); but tithing is better. Conscious tithing is a more attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible way to share in the divine plan than idle, unconscious, or capricious giving. Tithing takes both prayer and conscious volition. It is art and science. In principle and practice it gives us assurance that we are in active partnership with God. When we tithe, we share our gifts with appropriate instruments of God's work. Mr. Fillmore wrote:

"By the act of tithing, [persons] make God their partner in their financial transactions and thus keep the channel open from the source in the ideal to the manifestation in the realm of things. Whoever thinks that he [or she] is helping to keep God's work going in the earth cannot help but believe that God will help him [or her]" (KTL, p. 105).

As revealed in this passage, tithing is an expression of our participation with Divine Mind in Its manifestation. In this way, tithing is testimony that we are "helping to keep God's work going." If you are ever in doubt about the principle and process of tithing, you might review this passage. When we tithe, we are not only giving in a spiritual sense, not only entering into active alliance with Divine Mind in the manifestation of the Good, but also seeking God first in thought and activity. As we remember, seeking God first is a fundamental requirement of the prosperity process (P, p.141). By tithing, we confirm for ourselves that we are putting God first in all that we do. This is not just an extremely mystical enterprise, it is also exceedingly practical as well. Mr. Fillmore expands on the practical dimension of the process:

“One of the most practical and sensible ways of seeking God's kingdom first is to be a tither, to put God first in finances. It is the promise of God, the logical thing to do, and the experience of all who have tried it, that all things necessary to their comfort, welfare, and happiness have been added to them in an overflowing measure. Tithing establishes method in giving and brings into the consciousness a sense of order and fitness that will be manifested in one's outer life and affairs as increased efficiency and greater prosperity” (P, pp.141-142).

These are powerful and true words. As you begin to tithe, be prepared to prosper; it is inevitable (P, p.144). What is left is the question of where to direct the tithe. As always, we can get some great ideas about this from our instructor, Mr. Fillmore:

“The question of wise distribution is closely related to the matter of filling God's treasury. To whom shall we give and when are questions quite important. There are several truths that may be considered in this connection, but then each individual finds it necessary to trust to the Spirit of wisdom manifest in his [or her] own heart, since there are no rules or precedents that one can follow in detail. This is as it should be, for it keeps the individual judgment, faith, love, sympathy, and will alive and active .. If we follow the Spirit of wisdom we shall not give to anything that is contrary to the teachings of Jesus, but spend every penny in the furtherance of the good news of life that He proclaims and in the promotion of the [fellowship] of [humanity] that it is His mission to establish on earth among all those who become [conscious children of God] through Him” (P, pp. 135-136).

Your tithing should be a most individual matter, and Spirit should be consulted regarding the disposition of all tithes. With every instance of income comes a new opportunity to tithe; and just as we give thanks for each specific instance of receiving, we may prayerfully consult Spirit for guidance as to the proper recipient of each specific tithe. As Mr. Fillmore noted, following Spirit will lead us to give to agents and enterprises that support or further the teachings of Jesus Christ. Unity students are always ready, willing, and able to do this. We are always on the lookout for recipients of our tithes. The identity of these agents and enterprises is a matter for your own prayerful deliberation. This is as it must be. You are free. **Ask Spirit to reveal to you the proper recipient of your tithe. You will know.**

Scripture reveals that tithes often were directed to the Levites (priests and religious officials). The spiritual workers in our life, those persons and institutions that supply us with spiritual nourishment are appropriate recipients of our tithes. However, we want to be sure not to assume to limit Spirit. Mr. Fillmore offered his own insight into the proper recipients of our tithes:

“The tenth should be set apart for the upkeep of some spiritual work or workers. **It should be set apart first even before one's personal expenses are taken out, for in the right relation of things, God comes first always.** Then everything else follows in divine order and falls into its proper place” (P, p.141).

Tithing is always a matter between you and God; a matter resolved through prayer. Many of God's works and workers are known to you already, and the guidance of Spirit will help you recognize others. Among institutions you might include your local church or religious community, your religious movement, your prayer group, a publisher of spiritual texts you enjoy, or any group that works to support and expand the Good; among workers you might include your pastors, spiritual instructors, beloved authors, or any other who contributes to your spiritual growth.

By all means, be creative in your tithing. The possibilities suggested above are just a few of your options; the workers of Spirit are everywhere, in every occupation, in every institution. Look around: God is omnipresence! The choice is always yours. Let Spirit guide you and you will always find just the right recipient for your tithe; and remember that as Louis E. Meyer affirms in and through the title of a short yet powerful text (no longer published): *As You Tithe So You Prosper*.

As we conclude this section, we are knowing that you are putting the principles of prosperity into practice as you continue to live the life of a Unity student. We are delighted to know with you that you are prospered now.

With Unity's co-founder, Myrtle Fillmore, we affirm:

“The truths that are here spoken are energized by the living Spirit. Your mind and heart are now open and receptive to the ideas that will inspire you with the understanding of the potency of your own thought and word. You are prospered. Your home has become a magnet, drawing to it all good from the unfailing, inexhaustible reservoir of supply. Your increase comes through your righteousness.” (HLG, p. 147)

## Living the Life - Chapter Four

### The Church Experience in Unity

The purpose of this chapter is to familiarize Unity followers with Unity's understanding of the church, and the role of church in spiritual life. Important topics to be covered in this chapter include:

- (1) Brief historical background and key elements of the Unity church experience
- (2) Important understandings of "church" in Unity
- (3) How the church relates to spiritual life and spiritual unfoldment of individuals

Background material for this class comes from the works of the Fillmores, historical studies of the movement, the PRUF document, and *Libertas et Veritas*.

As we begin this chapter on the church, and continue our study on "living the life," it is well for us to reflect briefly on the emergence of the Unity "church." Those who have reviewed the *Welcome to Unity* text on *Unity and History* will remember that the date of Unity's founding is traced to Myrtle Fillmore's healing and the beginning of Unity's publishing ministry. It was in 1889 that Charles and Myrtle Fillmore published the first issue of *Modern Thought*. In the early period of the movement, the emphasis of the Fillmores was on healing and the publications of periodicals. In a certain sense, then, **the first Unity "church" was made up of the readers of *Modern Thought*.**

In 1890, Charles and Myrtle established The Society of Silent Help—a prayer ministry. Participants in the prayer ministry could be considered members of the "second wave" of members in the Unity church. Silent Unity continues to this day to be the prayer ministry of Unity Worldwide Headquarters (formerly, Unity School). During this same early period of Unity's unfoldment, the Fillmores were studying with Emma Curtis Hopkins. Hopkins is rightly known as "the Teacher of teachers" and the "Founder of New Thought" since she was the one who taught the great leaders of the emerging New Thought movement.

It is important to note that Hopkins ordained her graduates as ministers and empowered them to go forth and establish churches. Hopkins ordained the Fillmores in 1891. Certainly, the Fillmores

were teaching Truth before their ordination by Hopkins, but the ordination in 1891 can be seen to mark the beginning of their official ministry as teachers of Truth. Thus, by 1891, the three central elements of what can properly be called the Unity church experience were established:

- (1) Ministry of the written word (1889)
- (2) Healing ministry (1890)
- (3) Teaching ministry (1891).

As Thomas E. Witherspoon noted in *Myrtle Fillmore: Mother of Unity*: "The first few years of the Unity movement were devoted largely to the development and expansion of Silent Unity [healing], the publication of *Unity* and *Wee Wisdom* [written word], establishing a Sunday School and classes for teaching Truth [teaching]" (MFM, p.58). In the 1890's, the Fillmores offered classes and services on a regular basis in Kansas City and by 1900 "the one-hundred seat chapel the Fillmores used for classes and services was too small for the crowds that were being attracted" (MFM, p.60).

Students who are interested in the emergence of Unity's public ministry may like to read chapters 3 and 4 of Witherspoon's text and chapters 6 and 7 of *The Story of Unity* by James Dillet Freeman. Both authors have sought to make the point that the cofounders did not intend to "start a church." As Witherspoon noted, regarding Unity at the turn of the century: "Church services were held on **Sunday and Wednesday afternoons at first**. The intention was to avoid conflicts with established churches. The Fillmores never intended to start a church, but to provide a place for religious and spiritual education for all people, regardless of their creed. Eventually, the demand for Sunday morning services was so great the Fillmores yielded; likewise, they established a Wednesday night prayer meeting" (MFM, p.61). This statement is similar to one made by James Dillet Freeman, regarding another instance of Charles Fillmore changing his mind about religious organizations. Writing about the establishment of "The Unity Annual Conference," a precursor of the Association of Unity Churches, Freeman observes: "Although Charles Fillmore told them at first, 'I can't see why you want to bind yourselves with a lot of rules and regulations; leave yourself free,' he could see presently that the step they had taken was a necessary one" (SU, p.186).

**Unity followers today need not be concerned with the question of whether or not Charles Fillmore intended to establish a church in the 1890's. What is important is that early in the history of the Unity movement a decision was made to establish churches (often called "centers," "societies," and "temples" in the early days), ordain ministers, train teachers,**

**and develop congregations based on Unity's religious teachings.** In 1906 the first Unity ministers were ordained—nine (including Charles and Myrtle). By 1928, about 300 Unity centers carried Unity literature.

The decision to establish churches was an excellent one. Churches allow individuals an excellent opportunity for spiritual growth. As Myrtle Fillmore wrote:

“The advantage of groups of Truth students being so closely associated is that they form **the habit of constantly reminding one another of the unfailing law and unchanging Principle....** We learn to be less concerned with what others are doing and more concerned with our own attitude toward their doings. We are less eager to impress folks and more determined to have something worth heeding before we offer it” (MFHL, p.174).

In other words, by gathering together under the Unity name and sharing the common ideals for which Unity stands, Unity followers have the opportunity to create an environment that nurtures and promotes the spiritual development of each member. This is the ideal aim of the spiritual experience which is known as the church. In Unity, this experience continues to be an expression of Unity's original threefold ministry:

- (1) Ministry of the written word
- (2) Healing ministry
- (3) Teaching ministry.

Turning now to a summary/review of several important understandings of "church" in Unity, students are first referred to the PRUF document. Special attention should be given to statements offered under the heading of "The Church" (statements 24-39). These statements deal explicitly with Unity's understanding of the church. A number of the statements are covered in other chapters of this text. Key understandings will be noted here. Students are referred to the PRUF for more detailed explanation. (Numbers in the following section refer to statement numbers in the PRUF; key elements are in bold print.)

24. **A Unity church is a Christian church.**

25. It is a Christian church in the tradition of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, founded on the principles of Christian Idealism.

26. A Unity church accepts all the doctrines of Christianity (spiritually interpreted, personally applied).
27. **A Unity church accepts the Bible as its primary text.**
28. **A Unity church recognizes that Truth is expressed in all religions that affirm self-transcendence (of mortal mind) in the context of spiritual freedom and in the absence of any form of submission to mortal/material authorities.**
29. **Members of a Unity church recognize themselves as followers of Jesus Christ and, thus, are called upon (not to "convert" others, but) to demonstrate Truth and follow Jesus Christ in the Regeneration.**
30. **A Unity church is first and foremost a community of spiritual beings.**
31. A Unity church is dedicated to the reaffirmation and further advance of the teachings of Jesus Christ.
32. **A Unity church is truly independent and free; represented by no single corporation, church, school, or other institution.**
33. A Unity church is composed of truly independent persons, groups, and institutions that have voluntarily joined together.
34. A Unity church is dedicated to the full manifestation of divinity and thus committed to the highest principles of church government, teachings, and education.
35. A Unity church is open, free, **democratically structured and egalitarian in principle and practice.** It allows the full participation of clergy and lay members in church government at all levels. ("Egalitarian" means absolute equality.)
36. A Unity church is doctrinally clear, religiously unified, spiritually confident.
37. A Unity church is inspired by an **excellently educated clergy.**
38. A Unity church recognizes the PRUF document as an outer expression of inner, spiritual faith, while also recognizing its openness to change.
39. **Jesus Christ is the Head of a Unity church.**

These statements stand as the primary understandings of the church in Unity. Additional points of note and amplification include these:

(A) **The church is primarily a gathering of persons, not an institution or an outer structure; its institutional form and outer structure** are manifestations of the consciousness of the persons who have voluntarily joined together to speak the word of Truth.

(B) **The mission of the Unity church is not to "convert others"** by proselytizing or through "missionary" activities" (see PRUF statement 29). The Unity church exists as an opportunity for seekers of Truth to join together, not as a pretext for pressing others to join.

(C) **The church is a permanent community**, not just a Sunday morning event.

(D) The church is inclusive, not exclusive, in its vision. **Everyone has a role to play in the life of the church; everyone adds to the community.**

(E) Official membership in a church is always an opportunity, never a requirement for individuals.

(F) Within the permanent community of the church, **participants enjoy sharing and collectively enriching and deepening common elements** such as historical traditions and teachings, religious language, prayer, tithing, singing/music, rituals of spiritual celebration and affirmation (baptism, communion, Christmas candle lighting, burning bowl, and Easter "life board/flower"), rites of passage (christening, marriage, ordinations, membership), communal gatherings and activities (meals, fellowship meetings).

(G) **The spiritual leader of a church is selected by the community. She or he is respected and appreciated as the teacher and director of the church.** Jesus Christ is Head of the church.

(H) The material manifestations (buildings, furnishings, grounds) of the church are respected and appreciated as expressions of a spiritual community.

Charles and Myrtle Fillmore both wrote about the nature of spiritual communities (churches) based on Unity ideals. Students may desire to review Charles Fillmore's *Talks on Truth* (lessons 9 and 11). Selections offered under "church" and "church of Christ" in *The Revealing Word* offer a spiritual interpretation of the words as they apply to individual unfoldment. Students might also review "Our Methods," "Helping Others," and "To Truth Teachers" in *Myrtle Fillmore's Healing Letters* for some insights into Myrtle's understanding of living the spiritual life in the context of spiritual community. From the works cited here, we offer the following selections as noteworthy statements:

**"The true church of Christ is never organized upon the earth,** because the minute that man [humanity] organizes his religion, he ceases to be guided wholly by the free Spirit of truth, and to that extent he falls away from the true church.... **The church of Jesus Christ still waits for a ministry that will represent it as it is—an organization in heaven without a head on earth,**

**without a creed, without a line of written authority.** This church exists and must be set up in its rightful place—the minds and hearts of men [persons]. It can never be confined to any external organization; whoever attempts such a movement, by that act ceases to represent the true church of Christ” (TT, p.109).

“Whoever formulates a creed or writes a book, claiming it to be an infallible guide for mankind [humanity]; whoever organizes a church in which it is attempted, by rules and tenets, to save men [persons] from their evil ways; whoever attempts to offer, in any way, a substitute for the one omnipresent Spirit of God dwelling in each of us, is an obstructor to the soul's progress” (TT, p.105).

In a powerful expression of the Unity approach to apparent differences between churches (and individuals), Myrtle wrote:

“We know that it is not wise or profitable to call attention to differences, not even in the effort to explain our point. If we were to go into other churches or classes, we should endeavor to avoid points of difference or apparent contradictions. We should look for all the points on which to agree and praise the other's faith and good works.... So rather than feel that you must "stand up for Truth if it is ridiculed" just let the Truth in you stand for itself. How can a thing be ridiculed, really? If one who knows the Truth and takes no account of evil just keeps poised and loving, that is proof enough. One who speaks an untruth or is mistaken in his judgments has the Christ Mind within him to correct him. You do not need to do this. Leave it with him. Anyway why compare Unity with other teachings? This is not the Unity way. Unless some earnest soul, God-drawn, comes to you for an explanation or light in some point, better just to let all form their own conclusions” (MFHL, pp.23 & 25).

(In forming the Unity-Progressive Council, and understanding it to be a church, the founders took into prayerful considerations these and other wonderful teachings of the Fillmores regarding the church experience in both the ideal and the manifest realms. A good statement revealing the U-PC.'s response to the instructions of the Fillmores is found in *Libertas et Veritas*. Please see "The Council's Threefold Mission," especially the section on "Democracy and Freedom" (LV, pp.16-18). A selection from this text is worth citing:

“In an effort to establish a more authentically Unity institution, an institution which takes seriously Charles Fillmore's guidance on individual freedom and his evident concern with religious authoritarianism, the U-PC elected to use a fully democratic and egalitarian model as the basis for its political organization.... While we are quite aware that even this model may be something less than Charles Fillmore's highest ideals for religious organizations (as he writes in *Talks on Truth*, ‘the true church of Christ is never organized on earth’!), we are firmly convinced that it is the one model which most closely approximates that ideal in the world today” (LV, pp.17-18).]

We follow Spirit in this work. Therefore, our church remains open to change. From the foregoing, it is perhaps already clear how the church relates to the spiritual life and spiritual unfoldment of individuals. The church experience for the Unity follower is truly what he or she makes of it. Churches are not only *for* people; churches *are* people. The word church is derived from the Greek words for "assembly" (*ekklesia*) and "house of [or belonging to] the Lord" (kyriake). Charles Fillmore tells us that the church of Christ means “Spiritual consciousness, first individual, then collective. In the general usage the word church applies to persons who have been ‘born anew’ (John 3:3) through the quickening power of the word, gathered together in one body, their union being typified by the human body” (RW, p.37).

As with all dimensions of spiritual life, the church experience for the Unity follower begins with the individual. In Truth, there is no other way; there is no other place to begin living the life. As we begin putting into practice the wonderful teachings of Unity, we must always work from "the inside out." No work that is based on Truth ever begins with outer activity; it always begins with inner activity and the firm convictions that mind is primary and causative. **The first Unity church that anyone must attend to is the church within.**

“The individual’s consciousness is his ‘Lord’s house’ [church], and assembled within it are groups or aggregations of ideas. The spiritualized will carries to the different ‘churches’ the word of Truth and builds them up into a knowledge of their perfection and divinity by training them in spiritual thinking” (RW, p.37).

The outer church and churches in which we participate are always outpicturings of the inner church. By consciously deciding to participate in Unity, and especially (for those who chose to become participating members of a genuine Unity church, individuals are making a choice to join in fellowship with others who committed themselves to the discovery and full manifestation of the Christ life. The inner work of spiritual growth remains to be done by each person. This is part of the empowering message of Unity: *you must do it yourself, and you can, no one else can do it for you.* By becoming part of a spiritual community based on Unity principles, an individual becomes part of this tradition of self-empowerment and regeneration.

In such a community, the high ideals that you love and seek to express are shared by others. Here the mortal/material culture is left behind. Everyone you meet in this place is seeking what you are seeking (Truth), knowing that they are succeeding, knowing that you, too, are succeeding, using the same words, recognizing the same Principles, sharing the same fundamental beliefs. Does this mean that we do not need to find the secret place within, continue to do our prayer work? Not at all. Does this mean that we find the kingdom of heaven with the help of others? No, not really. The kingdom of heaven is in the midst of you (see Luke 17:21). It is always up to us. It always begins with the individual. The wonderful and exciting event that is known as the church is simply the manifestation of the heartfelt desire of individuals to find (indeed to demonstrate in their lives) a community, a family, and a home in which the mighty quest for Truth is shared, celebrated, and recognized as the most vital, the most precious, and the most important mission of life. **Finding a Unity church does not tell you that your spiritual work is complete; but it does tell you that your spiritual demonstrations have begun.** “The advantage of Truth students being so closely associated is that they form the habit of constantly reminding one another of the unfailing law and unchanging Principle” (MFHL, p.174).

To those of you who are discovering Unity churches, we would say: Welcome to our Unity church. To those who are interested in becoming committed members of a Unity church, we say: Thank you for joining in this work, and as full participants in this church. “Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers [and sisters] dwell in unity” (Ps 133:1). Charles Fillmore wrote:

“[The] body of Christ” applies to the group of people who find perfect unity in Spirit, free from all the limitations of authority of creed. Such a group is free from bondage to the letter and subject to the Spirit of truth. Jesus Christ is Head of this

body, and its members are joined through a recognition of universal Spirit. This ‘body of Christ’ is sometimes referred to as the ‘church of Christ.’ .... There is Unity only in Spirit and ‘God is Spirit.’ All personal opinions upon which creeds are based disappear before the spiritual understanding that the only real unity is the body of Christ, His church. All who measure up to the Christ standard, forsaking everything pertaining to the personal, limited self, bringing forth the unlimited fruits of the Spirit, are members of this body, the ‘body of Christ.’ Through this body is to come the restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from old” (ASP, pp.78-79).

The ideal Unity church prayerfully seeks to reveal in and through all of its positions, activities, and manifest representations, its choice to be an authentic member of the church of Christ and, hence, demonstrate “the spiritual understanding that the only real unity is the ‘body of Christ, His church’” (LV, p.10). It is affirming that the church–community of spiritual beings–is in the *express* business, the regeneration business, and the restoration business: that is, the expression of divinity; the regeneration of the perfect unity of Spirit, soul, and body, and the restoration of all things. The aim of the Unity church would be to develop an authentic spiritual community of individuals who are joined in a common dedication to the mission of fully realizing and thus fully expressing the teachings of Jesus Christ, historically embodied by the Christian religion, and expressed in the Unity tradition of Christian Idealism, founded on the teachings of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore” (LV,p.10). This was the vision of the church that was called the Unity-Progressive Council. It can be a springboard for an ongoing vision of other works in the Unity movement. We are thankful for your participation in this vision and its manifestation that is this community.

# Living the Life

## Chapter Five

### Living the Spiritual Life

The purpose of this chapter is to familiarize Unity followers with Unity's understanding of the process and practice of spiritual living. Important topics to be covered in this chapter include:

- (1) Unity's understanding of humanity
- (2) Spiritual living for the individual; and the development of a Truth-based foundation for an individual's life
- (3) Spiritual living in the context of others, and the cultivation of Truth-based experiences with other persons and communities

Background material for this chapter comes from the works of the Fillmores, H. Emilie Cady's *Lessons in Truth*, the PRUF document, other courses in the Welcome to Unity series, and other chapters in this text.

This chapter will follow the sequence of topics given above. Key elements that the student should know will be noted in the questions for review at the end of this text.

As we begin this inquiry into "Living the Spiritual Life" and conclude our study in this "*Living the Life*" workbook, it is important to affirm that all of us are living the spiritual life already. It is a primary assertion of Unity and one of our most deeply held beliefs that humanity, the human race, is in essence spiritual (not merely physical or material). **We believe in and joyously affirm the divinity of humanity.** We are, each and every one, spiritual beings; therefore, individually and collectively we are living a spiritual life.

Our life is a spiritual adventure. Statements 7, 8, 12, and 22 in the PRUF give a clear summary of what this means:

"We believe that Divine Mind is and always has been present in every atom of humanity and matter. We believe in the spiritual basis of matter and its evolution"

(7).

“We believe in the principle of Idealism; that mind is the primary, foundational basis of reality; that material manifestation is a result of consciousness; thought and words are omnipotently causative of material effects. We believe that all minds are part of Divine Mind” (8).

**“We believe that Christ, the essence of the God-Mind, abides in each person, and is the perfection inherent in all creation” (12).**

“We believe that we are created in the image and likeness of God, and therefore are co-creators with God, endowed with free will and spiritual dominion” (22).

These are mighty assertions of Truth, power, and empowerment. They are also radically dynamic affirmations of Spirit and the spiritual foundation of reality itself. Read over these statements, think about the words and what they mean to you and about you. Think also about what they mean about your world, and those who share your world with you. To say we are living the spiritual life is redundant in the presence of statements of Truth like these. We cannot help but live the spiritual life since we are spiritual beings.

The key, of course, is to live this spiritual life consciously; to live our life as conscious spiritual beings is to discover and experience the fulfillment of existence. As Cady says so succinctly: “The ultimate aim of every man [person] should be to come into the consciousness of an indwelling God...” (LT, p.15).

Before going further in this chapter, students may find some benefit in reviewing Chapter One (Prayer) of this text. Those who do choose to review are directed to the section of the chapter that deals with the fulfillment of existence. As we embark on this, the greatest of all adventures, the adventure of conscious spiritual life, the statements offered in that earlier chapter stand as beacons of our becoming and guiding stars in our journey to a full conscious realization of divinity.

### **Unity's Understanding of Humanity**

As we proceed on in our exciting journey toward a fully conscious spiritual life, it is vital to keep in mind how we understand ourselves. In Unity, we understand humanity and the individual in a way that is (in the outer, at least) somewhat different from many other religious viewpoints—

especially those most of us were exposed to before coming to Unity. We are not interested in focusing on these differences, for in Truth we know that they are of no real consequence. What is important for Unity followers is that they seek to understand and awaken their faith in the Unity understanding of humanity and the individual. To facilitate this awakening and help perpetuate this awareness, students should carefully review statements offered under the heading of “Humanity” in the PRUF. Other statements cited earlier in this chapter and those referred to in the chapter on Prayer, are also of extreme importance. From the statements in the PRUF section on Humanity, the following excerpts are offered here for purposes of reiteration, review, and reflection. Students should refer to the PRUF for more detailed explanation. Numbers preceding the excerpts refer to statement numbers in the PRUF:

17. Humanity (and the individual) possesses a **threefold nature: Spirit, soul, and body.**
18. **The kingdom of heaven is within the individual; it is manifested through the individual’s realization of Divine Mind. This realization is the aim of humanity.**
19. **The full conscious realization of Divine Mind occurs only through the indwelling Christ-not material objects or persons.**
20. **The "second coming" is occurring through the quickening of the Christ Mind in individuals.**
21. **God's will for humanity is good and only good, i.e.: illumination, wholeness, prosperity, harmony, order, peace, joy, etc.**
22. We are created in the **image and likeness of God**, hence we **are co-creators with God**. Humanity is endowed with free will and spiritual dominion. As image and likeness, and co-creator **we take responsibility [recognize and accept our ability to respond] for our creation(s)**. (See also TP, p.139.)
23. **The Golden Rule (“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”) is the standard of life.**

These statements stand as the primary understandings of humanity in Unity. Additional points of note and amplification include these:

**(A) The essence of humanity is spiritual, not material; Christ, not Adam;** eternal, not mortal; infinite, not finite; one with God, not one with so-called nature.

**(B) “Humanity is the garden of God, of which the soil is the omnipresent thought substance.... In every man [person] the Christ, or the Word of God is infolded; it is an idea that contains ideas”** (KTL, p.165).

(C) “Superconsciousness is the goal toward which humanity is working” (ASP, p.36). This statement harmonizes with those statements (offered in the chapter on Prayer) that concern the aim of humanity.

(D) “Regardless of appearances there is an upward trend continually active throughout creation” (ASP, p.36); and “the whole creation responds to man's [human] consciousness” (HLG, p.21).

(E) “Man’s true identity is as the perfect-man idea in Divine Mind” (CH, p.36).

(F) See also statements 7, 8, and 12 in the PRUF document.

The Fillmores and Cady wrote about the essence and nature of humanity. For further study of Unity’s teachings on this subject, students are referred to the *Charles Fillmore Concordance* (see citations under “humanity,” but especially under “man”). Myrtle often offers insight into humanity. Selections of special note can be found in the following sources: In the *Healing Letters* (MFHL), see sections titled “*Drawing on the Source*,” “*Understanding the Body*,” and “*Developing Our Faculties*,” in *How to Let God Help You* (HLG), see sections titled “*The Purpose of Living*,” “*Life is a School*,” “*Your Wonderful Body*,” and “*Generation and Regeneration*.” For Cady’s understandings, see citations under “*Man*” in the index of *Lessons in Truth*; also see “*Finding the Christ in Ourselves*” and “*Oneness with God*” in *How I Used Truth*.

### **Spiritual Living for the Individual**

As clearly suggested in the foregoing, **living the spiritual life begins right at home, in our own consciousness.** In all that we do and desire to do, the role of consciousness is primary. The establishment and development of a Truth-based foundation for life is an individual project. No one else can build this foundation for you. The strength of this foundation will determine the strength and stability of your spiritual growth and your demonstrations. If the foundation is not sound, the structure(s) (your life, actions, experiences, and formations) that you erect upon it will be less than stable. Jesus’ lesson about two foundations is worth noting here. This lesson was given at the close of the Sermon on the Mount. It is quite fitting that we reflect upon it in this final chapter of our study of “*Living the Life*.” Jesus tells us:

“Everyone who listens to these words of mine [in the Sermon on the Mount], and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock. And everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not act on them will be like a fool who built his house on sand. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. And it collapsed and was completely ruined” (Matthew 7:24-27, *NAB*).

What is important to note here is that Jesus prefaces His comments about the two houses and their foundations with the observation that the conditions He describes prevail for those who “*listen to these words.*” The focus of the teaching here is on the foundation of the houses. **Allegorically interpreted and personally applied, the house represents our lives, the foundation (rock or sand) represents our faith.** Jesus’ story deals with only two options, building on faith or building on lack of faith. As followers of Unity we are indeed persons who “*listen to these words*” of Jesus and seek to build our house of life on the rock of our Unity faith. At this point in our spiritual adventure, none of us will consciously seek to do anything less. A foundation of sand is out of the question for us; we are not fools. And so, one rightly asks, how do I go about building my house on the rock of faith; how do I develop a sound spiritual foundation for my life? In short, how do I put Practical Christianity (Unity) into practical expression?

At this point in your study you should already have some good insights into and understandings of how to develop this foundation. In fact, most folks who have had any exposure at all to Unity are already working to develop a spiritual foundation for their lives. The specifics of this process are, of course, individual. Remember, no one can build this foundation for you. We can, however, offer four general suggestions that should prove quite helpful in finding and developing a spiritual foundation. These suggestions are reminders of principles and practices you already know. They are made explicit here to remind you of the practical character of Unity's teachings.

**A.) Prayer is the cornerstone of spiritual life.** It is the one activity which is most vital to spiritual living. Review the chapter on prayer in this text. **Prayer is the primary basis of spiritual advance and, hence, manifest material advance.** Prayer is communion with God. It is, as Charles Fillmore notes, “the best way to establish unity with the Father-[Mother]-Mind” (TP, p.177). When the highest aim of prayer is achieved, the fulfillment of existence is experienced. **We should make**

**time for prayer every day. Living the spiritual life is predicated on becoming a praying person.** The transformation of your life begins with prayer. (Review PRUF statements 9 and 10.)

**B.) Conscious and constant realization and expression of divinity is our practical aim.** Seek to experience your divinity at every opportunity. Your Christ consciousness, your oneness with God, your realization of the kingdom, your “homecoming” is not limited to your prayer experiences (your daily half-hour, hour [or more] of prayer). **Seek to expand your “prayer-consciousness” (conscious oneness with God) beyond your formal prayer time. Make a point of realizing the oneness with God (Christ consciousness) that you experience during your formal prayer time at times when you are not engaged in the formal prayer experience.** A helpful way to begin doing this is to remember the experience of oneness that you achieve in formal prayer and then, at other times during the day, seek to rediscover the experience. Keep working at this and you will find you will be successful. You will also find that your ability to realize and express your divinity at all times becomes easier and easier. Additionally you will discover that your life becomes easier and more interesting, your desires manifested more quickly, and your relationships experienced more harmoniously. This is living in the kingdom. This is demonstrating the love of Christ, the Good of life, and the grace of God. (See PRUF statements 18, 22, 23, 29, and 31)

**C.) The development of a spiritually-based life-style and individual spiritual culture enriches, deepens, and broadens spiritual life.** To assist us in the development of such a life-style and culture, we might make a habit of reviewing our individual and life-style choices relative to our understanding of Truth. General types of questions that one might ask during such reviews include: does this activity accord with what I know of Truth; does this pursuit bring more of Good/God into expression; does this action observe the Golden Rule; is doing this task conducive to my spiritual growth; does this possible choice of mine bring good to all concerned? Obviously such reviews can be broad or very narrow, they can deal with issues/activities of great importance in life or ones of seemingly slight consequence. Everything from jobs and marriages to what we do in our spare time can be reviewed in this way. There are no wrong or right answers to these reviews; each is unique and each is personal to you. **The benefit of these reviews is that they put your life into spiritual context by relativizing your outer activities to your inner spiritual understanding.** As Unity followers begin to develop a spiritual life-style they often find that their activities, goals, and friends begin to change. This process is often accelerated through the review

process discussed here. New elements frequently accompanying the development of a spiritual life-style are these: **(a) regular reading and study of spiritual literature, (b) increased church attendance, and (c) increased interest in spiritual and religious issues.**

**D.) Living the spiritual life is powerfully assisted through the use of spiritual tools and techniques.** What we think, say, do, and experience is, as we know, an expression of our consciousness. As individuals who are seeking to live the spiritual life, we seek to become mindful of our consciousness, to monitor our thoughts, expressions, and actions, and measure them against the affirmations, Truth, and spiritual principles that we have accepted as the ideals of our life. When we develop the habit of taking stock of our consciousness and becoming aware of our thoughts, words, and actions, we are able to recognize quickly a thought or appearance of error. When those situations arise it is extremely helpful to be mentally prepared to eliminate the error thought. This is where spiritual tools and techniques prove beneficial. Four are of special note:

**(1) Denial and Affirmation.** Perhaps the most powerful tool of this type that we have in Unity is "Denial and Affirmation." The Unity student should make a practice of using denial and affirmation when ever he/she encounters a thought or an appearance of error. Review chapter two in the *Welcome to Unity* text on *Unity's Foundational Teachings*, and also lessons IV and V in *Lessons in Truth*.

**(2) "The Golden Key."** In brief, this approach directs us to eliminate error thoughts/conditions by ceasing to think about the error and thinking about God instead. This is a very effective approach that was made famous by Emmet Fox. Students may like to review Fox's pamphlet called *"The Golden Key"*(available in most Unity bookstores. .

**(3) Realization of God.** Some Unity students have found that if they have a clear and powerful realization of the Truth of God's presence in the face of a seeming error, the error is eliminated. Students should seek to cultivate such an awareness through prayer.

**(4) Statements of Truth or scripture citations.** Some Unity students have found that if they have a clear and powerful realization of Truth based on a statement of Truth (often



Although **Unity prescribes no rules for individual conduct and offers no formal code of ethics for different types of relationships**, the pursuit of Truth-based experiences with others is often assisted when we recognize the types or relationship(s) that we have with other persons. The list given above, moves, generally, from more intimate to less intimate, more familiar to less familiar, more comprehensive (touching more areas of life) to less comprehensive, and more complex to less complex. **The kinds of experiences that we have in relationships with spouses, mates, family members, and friends will tend to be longer lasting, deeper, and more emotionally intense than those with social acquaintances and business colleagues.** In principle, our relationship with the communities in which we dwell and the social groups to which we belong is no different than our relationship with other persons-i.e.: we are more involved with some than others, more active in some than others. **The most important community for most Unity followers is probably the church. Other communities include our neighborhoods, our city, social groups, political parties, and social-action groups.**

The above mentioned considerations are helpful but not absolutely necessary to our development of Truth-based experiences with others. What is absolutely necessary is the recognition that all persons are (like you) spiritual beings, offspring of the same Father-Mother; and as such, we are all members of the same spiritual family; joined in Spirit and in love.

**The recognition of spiritual oneness, confirmed by spiritual love, is the first necessity for Truth-based experiences with others.** The God (Divine Mind) that dwells in you and with whom you commune in prayer is the same God that dwells in all others. “At the center, all is one and the same God forevermore” (LT, p.133). “If you fully recognize that the God that dwells in you dwells in all men [persons], you know that each one's own Lord, the Christ within each one, will make no mistake” (LT, p.135). Knowing this is the first and most important guide to the development of Truth-based experiences with others. As Jesus said, “[The greatest commandment is] you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.... The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments” (Matthew 22: 37, 39-40).

**In Unity, we know that love in divine mind is the idea of universal unity** (Charles Fillmore). This is our initial guide, and we should seek it in all of our experiences with others. Other guides include: **(2) let the Golden Rule be your rule of conduct with others; (3) let prayer be your primary recourse for the resolution of challenges with others; (4) let the Spirit of Truth (what you know to be the Truth) be your guide in making decisions regarding others; (5) let**

**communication, not command and control, be the ideal for that you strive in all relationships;** (6) let the Good (God) in you shine forth in all you think, say, and do relative to others. **Neither think nor speak in error about others;** and (7) **let go and let God if and when it comes time to say Good bye.**

Above all, (1) let the recognition of spiritual oneness, confirmed by spiritual love, be your primary aim in all your experiences with others. **Love God, and love your neighbor as yourself.** With this final direction, our formal course in living the life concludes. *It is your responsibility—the recognition and acceptance of your innate ability to respond from the Christ within you—to take up the challenge and go on with living the spiritual life that is already yours!*

# Key Facts and Ideas for Students to Remember for Review of *“Living the Life”*

## Chapter One – Prayer

The evaluation at the end of this course will be based on these key facts and ideas.

(Please circle or fill in the correct answer.)

1. In daily \_\_\_\_\_ lies the secret of power.
2. As a practical guide to resolving questions of personal meaning, it is always wise to seek guidance \_\_\_\_\_.
3. To discover Unity’s foundational teachings on prayer or any other subject, it is always helpful to review the \_\_\_\_\_ (a unique sample of systematic theology, originating from Charles Fillmore’s last published statement of faith and democratically mediated by over a hundred dedicated Unity students in the early 1990’s).
4. The primary source documents for Unity’s teachings are the works of \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Prayer is \_\_\_\_\_ between persons and God. Prayer takes place in the \_\_\_\_\_ part of a person’s being.
6. Prayer is the primary basis of \_\_\_\_\_ advance.
7. Prayer is best conceived as: supplication or affirmation
8. Is prayer cumulative” Yes or No
9. In what three ways does Charles Fillmore say God answers our prayers?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Prayer is the most highly accelerated \_\_\_\_\_ known.
11. In Unity, we avoid praying to the Father in the name of Christ Jesus.  
Yes or No.
12. Prayer must be made within, in the \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Does prayer change God? Yes or No

14. It is necessary to pray \_\_\_\_\_.
15. What is all that we desire? \_\_\_\_\_
16. John tells us that \_\_\_\_\_ is the fulfillment of existence.
17. The “Father’s house” is a synonym for the \_\_\_\_\_  
consciousness.
18. The best way to find our way back to this house is through \_\_\_\_\_.
19. When a disciple said these words to Jesus, “Teach us to pray,” Jesus responded by giving a special prayer formula called \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. Where in the Bible is this prayer found?  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
20. Give the titles of two excellent Unity books on prayer.  
\_\_\_\_\_ And \_\_\_\_\_. Which one is  
the “primer?” \_\_\_\_\_
21. In prayer, it can be helpful to recognize God as both \_\_\_\_\_ and  
\_\_\_\_\_.
22. Name the “Lesson” of *Lessons in Truth* where we find considerable  
information about the Silence.  
\_\_\_\_\_.
23. In the silence, we are waiting upon \_\_\_\_\_.
24. Meditation gives way to the \_\_\_\_\_.
25. Should we give thanks at the close of a prayer session? Yes or No

# Key Facts and Ideas for Students to Remember for Review of *“Living the Life”*

## Chapter Two – Healing

The evaluation at the end of this course will be based on these key facts and ideas.

(Circle or fill in the correct answer.)

1. It is God’s will for us to be well. True or False
2. Charles Fillmore wrote that “health, real health, is from \_\_\_\_\_ and does not have to be manufactured in the without. Health is the very essence of Being.”
3. Does Unity teach the denial of the physical body? Yes or No
4. Does Jesus Christ teach that death, dissolution, and decay are the destiny of the body? Yes or No
5. What is the work of the “true healer?” \_\_\_\_\_
6. Can permanent healing result other than from the result of spiritual understanding? Yes or No
7. Charles Fillmore equated healing with spiritual baptism, and taught that the highest form of prayer treatment is realizing the \_\_\_\_\_ presence and its expression through the power of the \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Charles Fillmore wrote that “Every time we \_\_\_\_\_, we cause the atoms of the body to tremble and change their places.”
9. Nature’s [healing] work is easily accomplished when we understand the right use of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
10. “The first step in all spiritual healing is \_\_\_\_\_ and the next is \_\_\_\_\_.”
11. Did Jesus Christ originate the healing principles? Yes or No
12. Giving a universal formula for healing, Charles Fillmore stated: “Any declaration man [a person] may make in which the name \_\_\_\_\_ is used reverently will contact the spiritual ether in which the Christ I AM lives and will open the mind and body to the inflow of spiritual healing rays.”

13. "The object of all treatment is to raise the mind to the \_\_\_\_\_ consciousness, through which all true healing is accomplished."
14. Jesus Christ asked \_\_\_\_\_ on the part of those whom He healed.
15. "Through the exercise of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, our spiritual quality is fused into unity with the power of Christ and the healing is marvelously accomplished."
16. "You can \_\_\_\_\_ a weak body into strength . . . \_\_\_\_\_ and giving thanks liberate the finer essence of soul and body . . . ."
17. What are we to do if our prayers do not seem immediately to bring results? \_\_\_\_\_.
18. "Steadfast affirmations of \_\_\_\_\_ will harmonize the whole body structure and open the way to attainment of healthy conditions of mind and body."
19. Charles Fillmore taught that the metaphysical name for the "restorative power of nature" is \_\_\_\_\_.
20. Jesus demonstrated instantaneous healing. True or False
21. In the understanding of Jesus Christ, is there such a thing as an incurable disease? Yes or No
22. Then, is there such a thing as contagion of disease? Yes or No
23. "When the sinning state of mind is \_\_\_\_\_ [or given up], and the right state of mind established, man [a person] is restored to his [her] primal and natural wholeness."
24. Is Jesus the only one who has authority to forgive sins? Yes or No  
Who else has this authority? \_\_\_\_\_.
25. Spiritual workers have to understand in detail how healing is done in order to demonstrate it. True or False

# Key Facts and Ideas for Students to Remember for Review of “Living the Life”

## Chapter Three - Prosperity

The evaluation at the end of this course will be based on these key facts and ideas.

(Circle or fill in the correct answer.)

1. As affirmed in statement #3 of the “PRUF” – “We believe in the singular supremacy and eternity of \_\_\_\_\_. There is only one Presence and one Power everywhere: \_\_\_\_\_. We know this \_\_\_\_\_ to be God.” (Hint: same word.)
2. Unity students recognize that success, wealth, abundance, and every good thing are not available to all persons. True or False
3. We believe that God’s will for humanity is \_\_\_\_\_ and only \_\_\_\_\_,
4. \_\_\_\_\_ success is a necessary consequence of spiritual success.
5. Is Substance “everywhere present?” Yes or No
6. The Latin roots of substance are *sub* and *stare* ( \_\_\_\_\_).
7. Substance is sometimes called “thought \_\_\_\_\_” and “\_\_\_\_\_ clay.”
8. Is God Substance? Yes or No
9. One of the most precious revelations of Truth students is the realization that they live in a universe of \_\_\_\_\_.
10. A. Is the law of supply a divine law? Yes or No  
B. Is it possible for persons to work in harmony with this law? Yes or No
11. What are the four steps that can be followed to demonstrate prosperity?

(Put a star next to the one noted in the text as perhaps the most important.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

12. What is the seldom used corollary of “God loves a cheerful giver” (II Corinthians 9:7)?
13. If you turned down a gift from another Unity student, you would not be surprised if he or she replied: ” \_\_\_\_\_ your good!”
14. God’s greatest gift to us is the power of \_\_\_\_\_.
15. What affirmation has Charles Fillmore told us sums up the whole law of prosperity? \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Is a gift given with reservations or “strings attached” really a gift?  
Yes      or      No
17. When the true spirit of giving is grasped properly, the act of giving becomes a \_\_\_\_\_ expression of our oneness with God and our affirmative response to and participation in the \_\_\_\_\_ process of spiritual growth.
18. Do Unity churches and religious communities always charge fees for classes or services? Yes      or      No
19. What is the name of the plan that services as the foundation for prosperity in Unity churches? \_\_\_\_\_.
20. Who first proposed this plan (noted in question #19)? \_\_\_\_\_.
21. Tithing means “giving a \_\_\_\_\_ of one’s supply to God and His work” (RW, p. 195).
22. In what famous spiritual book (which bears witness to the word of God) do we find support for the principle of tithing? \_\_\_\_\_
23. How will you know where to direct your tithes?
- A. Ask an accountant                      B. Ask an investment counselor  
C. Ask Spirit                                  D. Ask a friend
24. When should we set apart our tithe?
- A. After personal expenses; B. After other gifts are given; C. First; D. After savings.

**Key Facts and Ideas for Students to  
Remember for Review of “Living the Life”  
Chapter Four - The Church Experience in Unity**

The evaluation at the end of this course will be based on these key facts and ideas.

(Circle or fill in the correct answer.)

1. The first Unity “church” was made up of the readers of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The three central elements of the Unity church experience are:
  - A. Ministry of the \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. \_\_\_\_\_ Ministry
  - C. \_\_\_\_\_ Ministry
3. On what days and when during the day were the first formal Unit church services held? On (days) \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_; (AM or PM)
4. Do Unity followers today need to be concerned with questions about whether or not Charles Fillmore intended to establish a church in the 1890's?  
Yes or No
5. The first Unity churches were often called: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Myrtle Fillmore tells us that one of the advantages of Truth students being closely associated is that they form the habit of constantly \_\_\_\_\_ one another of the unfailing law and unchanging Principle.
7. A unity church is a (name of religion) \_\_\_\_\_ church.
8. A Unity church accepts (name of book) the \_\_\_\_\_ as its primary text.

9. A Unity church affirms that its teachings are the only Truth. Yes or No
10. Members of a Unity church recognize themselves as followers of \_\_\_\_\_.  
They are called upon to demonstrate \_\_\_\_\_ and follow \_\_\_\_\_ in the Regeneration.
11. A Unity church is first and foremost a community of \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Is a Unity church truly independent? Yes or No
13. Could a genuine Unity church be bound to control by any of the following: the Unity-Progressive Council, the Association of Unity Churches, the International New Thought Alliance, or the Independent Alliance of Ministers in Unity? Yes or No
14. A Unity church is \_\_\_\_\_ structured and \_\_\_\_\_ in principle and practice.
15. A Unity church is inspired by a clergy that is \_\_\_\_\_ educated.
16. \_\_\_\_\_ Is the Head of a Unity church.
17. The church is primarily a \_\_\_\_\_, not an \_\_\_\_\_ or outer structure.
18. The mission of a Unity church is to convert through missionary activity. T or F
19. The church is a \_\_\_\_\_ community, not just a Sunday morning event.
20. Who has a role to play in the life of the church? \_\_\_\_\_
21. Individuals become members of a church in order to share in church life. T or F
22. The minister of a Unity church is respected and appreciated as the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of the church.
23. The church of Jesus Christ still waits upon a ministry that represents it as it is. T or F
24. Using a fully democratic and egalitarian model as the basis for its political shows a church takes seriously the \_\_\_\_\_ 's guidance on individual freedom .
25. By following the guidance of the Holy Spirit, any organization can remain open to \_\_\_\_\_.
26. The first Unity church that one must attend to is the church of \_\_\_\_\_.
27. Finding a Unity church does not tell you that your spiritual work is done but it does tell you that your spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ have begun.

# Key Facts and Ideas for Students to Remember for Review of *“Living the Life”*

## Chapter Five - Living the Spiritual Life

The evaluation at the end of this course will be based on these key facts and ideas.

(Circle or fill in the correct answer.)

1. Unity, we joyously affirm the \_\_\_\_\_ of humanity.
2. We believe that \_\_\_\_\_, the essence of the God-Mind, abides in each \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The kingdom of heaven is \_\_\_\_\_ the individual; it is manifested through the realization of \_\_\_\_\_. This realization is the \_\_\_\_\_ of humanity.
4. God’s will for humanity is \_\_\_\_\_. The essence of humanity is Christ, not \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ is our standard of life.
6. Living the spiritual life begins right at \_\_\_\_\_ in our own \_\_\_\_\_. 7. What were the two types of foundations mentioned by Jesus in His story about house building? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. The house can be seen as our \_\_\_\_\_; the foundation can be seen as our \_\_\_\_\_.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ is the cornerstone of spiritual life.
9. Conscious and \_\_\_\_\_ realization and expression of divinity is our practical aim.
10. When should we seek to experience and express our divinity? \_\_\_\_\_ 11.. In living the spiritual life, we recognize that our realization of oneness with God is necessarily limited to our formal prayer experiences. True/False
12. The benefit of spiritual reviews of your pursuits and lifestyle is that they put your life into \_\_\_\_\_ context.

13. Name two of the three elements frequently accompanying the development of a spiritual lifestyle \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,

14. Name three of the four tools/techniques that are beneficial to the prompt elimination of error thought: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

15. Unity prescribes special rules for individual conduct in various types of relationships. True/ False

16. Relationships with spouses, partners, family members, and friends tend to be \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and more \_\_\_\_\_ than those we have with social acquaintances and business colleagues.

17. The \_\_\_\_\_ may be the most important community for most Unity followers.

18. Name one other community in which one might be counted a member.  
\_\_\_\_\_.

19. The primary aim of all our experiences with others should be the recognition of \_\_\_\_\_ confirmed by \_\_\_\_\_.

20. Give Unity's (Charles Fillmore's) definition of love:  
\_\_\_\_\_

21. In dealing with others, we let the \_\_\_\_\_ be our rule of conduct.

22. \_\_\_\_\_ should be our primary recourse for the resolution of challenges.

23. Let \_\_\_\_\_, not command and control, be the ideal that you strive for in all relationships.

24. Neither think nor speak \_\_\_\_\_ about others.

25. When it comes time to say "Goodbye" to others, we should let \_\_\_\_\_ and let \_\_\_\_\_.

26. Jesus instructed us to love God and love our \_\_\_\_\_ as ourselves.

27. To take responsibility means to do what?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Bibliography for all volumes in Welcome to Unity  
with key to abbreviations used in the text**

Text cited here are recognized as Foundational, Progressive, and Reference texts of the Unity movement. Foundational texts are the Bible and those authored by the Fillmores and H. Emilie Cady. A list of complete works of the Fillmores and Cady appears after this bibliography. Reference texts are noted “(ref.)”

Texts in the bibliography are listed using the standard abbreviations used in citing the texts, and following this order: abbreviation, title, author, publisher, (ref.) if reference.

- 12P     *The Twelve powers of Man*, Charles Fillmore (Unity Books)  
 ASP     *Atom-Smashing Power of Mind*, Charles Fillmore (Unity Books)  
 BRH     *Both Riches and Honor*, Annie Rix Miltz (Unity Books)  
 BYT     *Be Ye Transformed* (post-Gospel New Testament),  
           Elizabeth Sand Turner (Unity Books)  
 CFH     *Charles Fillmore” Herald of the New Age* (Harper & Row) (ref.)  
 CH     *Christian Healing*, Charles Fillmore (Unity Books)  
 DB     *Dare to Believe!*, May Rowland (Unity Books)  
 DL     *Dynamics for Living*, Charles Fillmore,  
           comp. Warren Meyer (Unity Books)  
 EP     *Effectual Prayer*, Frances W. Foulks (Unity Books)  
 GA     *God is the Answer*, Dana Gatlin (Unity Books)  
 GP     *The Great Physician*, Ernest C. Wilson (Unity Books)  
 GPH     *God A Present Help*, H. Emilie Cady (Unity Books)  
 HLG     *How to Let God Help You*, Myrtle Fillmore (Unity Books)  
 HUT     *How I Used Truth*, H. Emilie Cady (Unity Books)  
 JCH     *Jesus Christ Heals*, Charles Fillmore (Unity Books)  
 KTL     *Keep a True Lent*, Charles Fillmore (Unity Books)  
 KTS     *Know Thyself*, Richard Lynch (Unity Books)  
 LBL     *Let There Be Light* (Old Testament),  
           Elizabeth Sand Turner, (Unity Books)  
 LL     *Living the Life* (vol. 3 WU), Dell deChant and R. Brent Elrod  
           (Unity Progressive Press)  
 LT     *Lessons in Truth*, H. Emilie Cady (Unity Books)  
 LV     “*Libertas et Veritas*” (pamphlet), Dell deChant  
           (Unity Progressive Press)  
 MBD     *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary*, Charles Fillmore (Unity Books)  
 MD     *Magnificent Decision*, James A. Decker (Unity Books)  
 MFHL    *Myrtle Fillmore’s Healing Letters*, Myrtle Fillmore (Unity Books)

- MFM *Myrtle Fillmore: Mother of Unity*,  
Thomas E. Witherspoon (Unity Books) (ref)
- MG *Mysteries of Genesis*, Charles Fillmore (Unity Books)
- MJ *Mysteries of John*, Charles Fillmore (Unity Books)
- NL *New Light on Unity*, Dell deChant (Unity-Progressive Press)
- P *Prosperity*, Charles Fillmore (Unity Books)
- PC *Practical Christianity for You*, James A. Sweaney (Unity Books)
- PN *Prove Me Now*, Gardner Hunting (Unity Books)
- PRUF *A Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith* (Unity-Progressive Press)
- PS *Patterns for Self-Unfoldment*, R. & Leddy Schmelig (Unity Books)
- RW *The Revealing Word*, Charles Fillmore (Unity Books)
- SS *Steps in Self-Knowledge*, R. & Leddy Schmelig (Unity Books)
- SU *The Story of Unity*, James Dillet Freeman (Unity Books) (ref.)
- TP *Teach Us to Pray*, Charles Fillmore & Cora Fillmore (Unity Books)
- TT *Talks on Truth*, Charles Fillmore (Unity Books)
- UFT *Unity's Foundational Teachings* (vol. 2 WU)  
Dell deChant (editor, compiler) (Unity-Progressive Press)
- UH *Unity and History* (vol. 1 WU), Dell deChant (Unity-Progressive Press)
- UW *The Unity Way*, Marcus Bach (Unity Books) (ref.)
- WU *Welcome to Unity: An Introduction to Unity and Its Teachings* (3 vols.),  
Hammock & deChant with Elrod & Rigdon (Unity-Progressive Press)
- YHG *Your Hope of Glory* (Gospels), Elizabeth Sand Turner (Unity Books)

## **Books by Charles Fillmore (1854 - 1948)**

*Christian Healing* (1909) CH  
*Talks on Truth* (1926) TT  
*The Twelve Powers of Man* (1930) (12P)  
*The Metaphysical Bible Dictionary* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.) (1931) with Theodosia deWitt Schobert MBD  
*Prosperity* (1936) P  
*Mysteries of Genesis* (1936) MG  
*Jesus Christ Heals* (1939) JCH  
*Teach Us To Pray* (1941 with Cora Fillmore) TP  
*Mysteries of John* (1946) MJ  
*Atom-Smashing Power of Mind* (1949) ASP  
*Keep a True Lent* (1953) KTL  
*The Revealing Word* (1959) - compiled by Cora Fillmore with Blaine Mays RW  
*Dynamics for Living* (1967) - compiled by Warren Meyer (DL)

## **Books by Myrtle Fillmore (1845 - 1931)**

*Myrtle Fillmore's Healing Letters* (1936) MFHL - edited by Frances W. Foulkes  
Originally published as *The Letters of Myrtle Fillmore*  
*How To Let God Help You* (1956) HLG

## **Books by H. Emilie Cady (1848 - 1941)**

*Lessons in Truth* (1894 - 1<sup>st</sup> "Lessons" appear in *Unity* magazine)  
*How I Used Truth* (1916) HUT  
*God a Present Help* (1912) GPH

## **Bibles Used in the Texts**

KJV *King James Version* Bible  
NAB *New American Bible*  
NRSV *New Revised Standard Version* Bible  
RSV *Revised Standard Version* Bible



