
Unity's Foundational Teachings Course Two

In the Welcome to Unity Series



Edited and Compiled by Dell deChant
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Unity's Foundational Teachings
Course One
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Unity is a link in the great educational movement inaugurated by Jesus Christ: our objective is to discern the truth in Christianity and prove it. The truth that we teach is not new, neither do we claim special revelations or discovery of new religious principles. Our purpose is to help and teach [humanity] to use and prove the eternal Truth taught by the Master.

- Charles Fillmore, *Lessons in Truth*, frontispiece

I want to stimulate you to lose sight of all differences, all side issues and lesser things, and seek but for one thing - this is the consciousness of the presence of an indwelling God in you and your life. And believe me, just as there is less separation between the spokes of a wheel the nearer they get to the hub, so you will find that the nearer you both come to the perfect Center, which is the Father, the less difference will there be between you and your brother.

- H. Emilie Cady, *Lessons in Truth*, Lesson 12, paragraph 7, p. 130 (1990 edition)

Right here, however, religious teachers should be on their guard in framing tenets for religious organizations. Do not dogmatize in creed, or statement of Being, as governing rule of thought and action for those who join your organization. These things are limitations, and they often prevent free development because of foolish insistence on consistency.* The creed you write today may not fit the viewpoint tomorrow; hence the safe and sure religious foundation for all [persons] is that laid down by Jesus, “The Spirit of truth ...shall guide you into all the truth.” A statement setting forth the teaching of a religious institution is essential, but compelling clauses should be omitted.

- Charles Fillmore, *The Twelve Powers of Man*, pp. 111-112

*Allusion to a popular quotation by Ralph Waldo Emerson in “Self-Reliance” – “A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.”

We believe in all the doctrines of Christianity spiritually interpreted.

- Charles Fillmore, Unity’s Statement of Faith,
number 31 in original version,
in Unity magazine (April 1921), p. 307

Unity's Foundational Teachings

Chapter One

A Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith

(This PRUF document was based on Charles Fillmore's Statement of Faith, which was removed from publication by Unity School around 1984. By the bylaws of the U-PC, this PRUF, written in 1989, was democratically mediated by the U-PC every seven years: 1996 and 2003. While the U-PC ceased to function formally by 2010, this material can provide a teaching tool for systematic theology in the setting of a progressive Unity faith.)

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the student with a deeper understanding of *A Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith* (PRUF). The PRUF is based on and developed out of Unity's Five Primary Teachings as deduced from Charles Fillmore's writings. These teachings form the primary foundation of the Unity movement, and students who desire to learn what Unity teaches should begin here. In summary form Unity's Five Primary Teachings are:

1. There is only one presence and one power everywhere: God, the Good Omnipotent.
2. Humanity is Divine.
3. The principle of Idealism: Mind is primary and causative.
4. The freedom of individuals in matters of belief.
5. The universal teachings of Christianity are true in their spiritual application.

Our exposition of The Five Primary Teachings as they are revealed in the "PRUF" will be presented in this chapter under these seven headings:

1. The P.R.U.F. document: What it is and what it is not
2. God/Universe
3. Christ and Jesus Christ
4. The Holy Spirit
5. The Trinity
6. Humanity
7. The Church

The PRUF Document: What It Is and What It Is Not

A Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith (P.R.U.F./PRUF) is a Unity Statement of Faith. It functions as a doctrinal document since it contains forty statements that express Unity's primary teachings. Doctrines are teachings. Doctrines are not dogmas. Dogmas are fixed, unchanging codes. Doctrines are teachings that are accepted by students and practitioners of a particular system of thought and/or practice. Doctrines are subject to change.

Members of the U-PC accepted the PRUF as a personal Statement of Faith expressing the teachings of Unity for themselves and for the Council to which they belonged. By affirming acceptance of the PRUF (by signing the back of a PRUF document), persons became members of the Unity-Progressive Council.

There are forty (40) statements in all. We know, from our allegorical studies, that the number 40 signifies completion. In this regard, the PRUF can be seen to be a complete summary of Unity's teachings in a symbolic sense. "Completeness," however, does not mean the last word or even the fullest expression of our beliefs. As we will see in Statement 38, we celebrate our openness to change. The U-PC was founded as a dynamic, ever growing organization made up of individuals committed to expressing the Christ Consciousness within them and ever recognizing it in others and all things. Change does not occur for its own sake or with the change of leadership. We have but one leader,—Jesus Christ, the Head of Unity, our church, and ourselves. It is in the spirit of the Christ that we accept the guidance of the Truth in all things. As Charles Fillmore said: "We follow Truth wherever she leads."

In the process of looking at each statement, you will notice that only two do not begin with "We believe...." Those statements are numbers 39 and 40, summarizing Unity's doctrine with the declaration of Christ as Head and gratitude for this vision.

All are welcome to consider these tenets; acceptance (signing) of the PRUF was considered sufficient condition for membership in U-PC. Yet, U-PC did not profess to be the only acceptable expression of Unity. U-PC affirmed these teachings to be built upon the Jesus Christ foundation of Christian Idealism so wonderfully set by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, co-founders of Unity. U-PC also recognized that others may affirm fellowship in the Unity movement without explicit

commitment to the PRUF or any other expression of Unity teachings. It was, however, the expressed mission of the Council to reaffirm the traditional teachings of Unity, and its members firmly believed these teachings to be most clearly and accurately expressed in the PRUF. This is why it is the Unity Statement of Faith that Unity students in the U-P.C. accepted. The existence of the PRUF is not exclusionary, for it is not dogma (a set of unchanging norms), nor is it creed (if creed is seen as what qualifies or disqualifies one from spiritual fellowship). Documents like the PRUF are found in all transcendental belief systems. They give clarity and precision to the expression of a religion's beliefs. The essence of U-PC's teachings was clearly stated within the document. The PRUF was used as the basis for U-PC teachings because the study of it reveals how each statement was built upon the other, bringing receptive students to fuller understanding.

How did this document come into being? The PRUF emerged from the prayerful studies and discussions of the founders of the Council. Following the guidance of Spirit, they sought to reaffirm Unity's traditional teachings in a manner that honored the original intent of Unity's founders, Charles and Myrtle Fillmore.

Charles Fillmore affirmed: "A statement setting forth the teachings of a religious institution is essential, but compelling clauses should be omitted" (12P, p. 112). He himself offered Unity's Statement of Faith in 1921. This was Unity's first systematic expression of its foundational beliefs. Although removed from print by Unity School in 1984, many believed that its foundational assertions still expressed Unity for them. The founders of U-PC were among those committed to the ideals expressed in Fillmore's "Statement." Guided by Spirit, they recognized the importance of the ongoing affirmation of Unity's traditional teachings found in the original "Statement" of 1921, and they committed themselves to reaffirming these teachings for the benefit of contemporary Unity students and the world that yearns to learn the Truth. The result of their work was the PRUF.

In addition to the "Statement" of 1921, two other texts inspired the PRUF. The first, introduced in February, 1989 by The Reverend Leddy Hammock, Senior Minister of Unity Church of Clearwater, was democratically affirmed by the voting membership of UCC as the congregation's Statement of Faith, subject to mediation by the voting membership as introduced by its Ministry Team. Although some in the Unity movement sought to discourage Hammock, she followed the direction of Spirit and the document was affirmed by the congregation in celebration of the centennial year of Unity's founding. With some changes voted in over time, this Statement continues to inspire members of UCC as the standard for this ministry. A few other churches followed UCC's lead and composed their own Statements of Faith.

As noted in *Libertas et Veritas*, "The work of the Unity-Progressive Council began on May 7, 1989, when three individuals, in prayerful openness to the Spirit of truth and with the guidance of God, ascribed their names to a statement of religious commitment containing seven affirmations" (LV, p. 10). This statement (titled "Initial Statement: Ideals and Purpose") stands as the founding document of the U-PC. Together with Charles Fillmore's "Statement" of 1921 and Hammock's "Statement" of February, 1989, the "Initial Statement" forms the foundation for the PRUF. The most crucial elements that the "Initial Statement" added to the other two texts were the now well-known "Three Ideals" of the Council.

The first PRUF, as it would come to be known, was a document consisting of affirmations that expressed the most heartfelt and deeply held spiritual ideals and purposes of the individuals involved. Revisions were made until the final draft was formalized on January 30, 1990, and approved and signed by the first members on January 31, 1990. The current version of the PRUF is the one that was approved on January 31, 1990. It is of historical note that the first persons to sign the PRUF signed a draft version of the document on November 29, 1989. These were Charles Throckmorton, Eric Gerard, C.B. Moore, Leddy Hammock, and Dell deChant. Helen Beck, who was not present for the November signing, joined the others in signing the finalized version on January 31, 1990.

Now, to add to the reader's understanding of the PRUF, a brief comment on each statement will be offered. The works of the Fillmores and H. Emilie Cady will be cited to aid in clarifying terms and concepts. A list of abbreviations for all texts cited is included at the end of this text. A copy of the PRUF would be helpful for reference (as follows).

P.R.U.F.: A Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith - 1989; revisited in 1997:

GOD/UNIVERSE

1. We believe that God is Mind.
2. We believe that God is One, Spirit-Mind: Omnipotence, Omniscience, Omnipresence, and Omnibenevolence.
3. 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.
4. We believe that God is Spirit, without singular form. We believe that God is to be found in all form as Substance, that is the only basis of all form. We recognize God as Divine Mind, the Intelligence at work in and through all things manifest and unmanifest. We recognize God as the Life, the unitive wholeness and fundamental unity of all that is real.

5. We believe that God, although formless, pure Being, may be perceived, known, and experienced variously, and, therefore, also referred to in various ways, for instance, as Father, Mother, Father-Mother, Divine Mind, Spirit, Spirit-Mind, All-Good, the Absolute, creative Mind, or any other name that may be used for the Divinity, according to the realization of the individual.
6. We believe that which is called evil (or the apparent lack of Good) is only an error in mortal consciousness and has no power, for seeming evil is without Substance, Intelligence, or Life in and of itself.
7. We believe that Divine Mind is and always has been the one and only presence in every atom of humanity and matter. We believe in the spiritual basis of matter in all of its forms.
8. We believe in the principle of Idealism; that Mind is the primary, foundational basis of reality; that material manifestation is a result of consciousness; thoughts and words are omnipotently causative of material effects. We believe that all minds have their basis in Divine Mind.
9. We believe that prayer is communion between individual persons and God and that this communion takes place in the innermost part of a person's being.
10. We believe that prayer is the primary basis of spiritual advance and, hence, manifest material advance. We believe in the power of the prayer of the individual, and in the power of communal prayer, to illumine, heal, prosper, harmonize, free, and bless, unlimited by time, space, or past beliefs or experience.

CHRIST AND JESUS CHRIST

11. We believe in Christ, the divine and only-begotten Child of God, in Whom is imaged the ideal creation, with perfect humanity on the throne of dominion.
12. We believe that Christ, the essence of God-Mind, abides in potential in each person, and is the perfection inherent in all creation, and continues to manifest in ever greater, more perfect ways.
13. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Child of God made manifest in Jesus of Nazareth, the embodiment of all divine ideas, Who overcame death, Who realized the At-one-ment between God and humanity, and Who is now with us as the Way Shower in the Regeneration: eternal, full spiritual Life.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

14. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the whole Spirit of God always in action: God's love and law ever pouring out through the grace of spiritual baptism upon all who, in understanding faith, receptively seek its guidance.

THE TRINITY

15. We believe in the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We recognize that the persons of the Trinity represent the three creative aspects of Mind, respectively: Mind, Idea, and Expression.
16. We believe the infinite, whole, unified presence of God is with us always, supplying fulfillment for our every expectation.

HUMANITY

17. We believe in the trinity of humanity: the threefold nature of every person as spirit (Spirit indwelling, superconsciousness, or Christ Mind), soul (mind – including

conscious and subconscious), and body (all that appears in the dimension of embodiment), and that spirit, soul, and body are a unit.

18. We believe that the kingdom of heaven (harmony with Divine Mind) is within the individual as divine order, and that through individuals, Divine Mind is progressively being manifested. We believe that the kingdom is present now, and now manifested according to the individual's realization of Divine Mind. We believe this realization and demonstration to be the highest ideal and great aim of humanity.

19. We believe that the manifestation of the kingdom, which is the full conscious realization (and therefore, demonstration) of Divine Mind, does not occur because of material objects or because of the mediation of personalities, but only through the indwelling Christ.

20. We believe that the "second coming" of Christ is now being fulfilled through the quickening of the Christ Mind in individuals everywhere.

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

22. 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. We believe that God's creations are divine ideas--the primal and eternal attributes of all that is enduring in the universe, whether visible or invisible. As the image and likeness of God, we are responsible for our creations – our thoughts – which are universally causative of effects in our world.

23. We believe in the Golden Rule, "*Do to others whatever you would have them do to you*" (Matthew 7:12 **NAB**) as the standard of life.

THE CHURCH

24. We believe, and so affirm, ourselves to be Christians and our organization in all of its manifestations to be a Christian church.

25. We believe, and so affirm, ourselves to be followers of Unity in the tradition of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, and as such we affirm ourselves to be Christian Idealists.

26. We believe, and so accept, all universal doctrines of Christianity.

27. We believe that the Bible testifies to the Word of God and confirms the Truth of God. We recognize that the Bible is variously interpreted by individuals, according to spiritual understanding. It is our primary text.

28. We believe that Truth is expressed in all religions and all doctrinal interpretations that affirm self-transcendence in the context of spiritual freedom and in the absence of submission to mortal/material authorities. We believe all such expressions of Spirit stimulate spiritual growth, promote human authenticity, and therefore demonstrate according to faith.

29. We believe that, as followers of Jesus Christ, we are each "*the light of the world*" (Matthew 5:14 **NAB**) and, thus, each called to demonstrate in our thinking, living, and teaching, the love of Christ, the Good of life, and the grace of God. We believe we are to follow Jesus Christ in the Regeneration – the unification of spirit, soul, and body in eternal spiritual unity.

30. We believe that this church is first and foremost a community of spiritual beings called together by God to seek, to learn, and to demonstrate Truth according to certain shared principles and ideals.

31. We believe that it is our divine purpose to reaffirm continually and further advance the teachings of Jesus Christ as understood in the tradition of Christian Idealism as established by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore (co-founders of the Unity movement) and as progressively advanced by others of like mind.

32. We believe that the Unity movement, including this church, is represented by no single corporation, church, school, or other institution or individual, but is a free and open assembly based on the teachings of Jesus Christ as understood in the tradition of Christian Idealism as established by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore and as progressively advanced by others of like mind.

33. We believe that the Unity movement, including this church, is composed of truly independent persons, groups, and institutions that have voluntarily joined together to learn, advance, and demonstrate the teachings of Jesus Christ as understood in the tradition of Christian Idealism as established by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore as progressively advanced by others of like mind.

34. We believe that a Unity church in the progressive tradition of the Fillmores and any church accepting this statement is a spiritual community dedicated to the full manifestation of Divinity. We believe that a community so dedicated must likewise be committed to the highest principles of church teachings, church education, and church government. We affirm ourselves to be such a church and such a community.

35. We believe that an institution, in order to facilitate the full manifestation of Spirit, the ongoing advent of Divinity in this world and the true transmission of Unity's Christian Idealism, must be doctrinally clear, religiously unified, and spiritually confident. We affirm our church to be such an institution, and formally recognize (this) a standard Unity Statement of Faith and secondary explanatory documents to guide and direct all members (clergy and lay) in matters regarding official church teachings.

36. We believe that an institution, in order to facilitate the full manifestation of Spirit, the ongoing advent of Divinity in this world, and the true transmission of Unity's Christian Idealism, must be inspired by an excellently educated clergy. We affirm our church to be such an institution and formally commit ourselves to establishing and developing a seminary founded on and dedicated to the highest standards of academic and practical excellence.

37. We believe that an institution, in order to facilitate the full manifestation of Spirit, the ongoing advent of Divinity in this world, and the true transmission of Unity's Christian Idealism, must be open, free, democratically structured, and egalitarian in principle and practice. We affirm our church to be such an institution, and formally recognize and institutionally empower the full participation of both clergy and lay members in church government at all levels and on all committees, boards, and other policy making, policy interpreting councils.

38. We believe, and so affirm, that the belief and understandings affirmed in this document represent an accurate statement of our faith. We accept this document as an outer expression of our inner, spiritual faith. We condemn no other religious teaching or teacher. We recognize and celebrate our openness to change according to the guidance of Spirit.

39. We accept Jesus Christ as the Head of our church, and ***we are grateful!***

40. Almighty Father-Mother God, we thank You for this vision of Omnipotence, Omniscience, Omnipresence, and Omnibenevolence in us and in all that we think and feel and say and do, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen!

Commentary on PRUF:

I. God/Universe

1. This statement affirms the religious basis of Unity's Christian Idealism. Statement 1 affirms the foundational Truth about divinity and the universe. "God is MindThis one and only Mind of God that we study is the only creator" (ASP, p. 93). "God is the original Mind in which all real ideas exist" (CH, p.18). "God is mind" is a very common statement in the works of Charles Fillmore.

2. Statement 2 further clarifies the primary concept. This statement offers the foundational teaching of Unity. "There is but one power in the universe, and that is God—good. God is good, and God is omnipresent" (LT, p. 44). Omnipotence means all power. "He is not only omnipotent (all-powerful); He is omnipotence (all power)" (LT, p. 19). Omnipresence means everywhere present. "The one Mind contains all, and all ideas exist in the one Mind. God is everywhere present. There is no place where God is not. He is in all, through all and around all" (RW, p. 142). Omniscience means all knowing or all intelligence. "He is not alone omniscient (all-knowing); He is omniscience (all knowledge)" (LT, p. 19). Omnibenevolence means all love. "God is loveAll the love in the universe is God" (LT, p. 18).

3. This expands and clarifies God's Omnibenevolence. Statement 3 offers the foundation of the denial of evil as an actual reality or force. Here again, the foundation teaching of "One" is essential. "The central proposition in the inspiration of Spirit is that God, or primal Cause, is good" (CH, p. 10). "Have faith in the innate goodness of all [persons] and all conditions. God is good and God is all, hence there can be no real condition but the Good" (CH, p. 93). "God is not loving. God is love..." (JCH, p. 27).

4. Statement 4 concludes the general introduction to the foremost teachings about God. The key terms in this statement are: Spirit, Substance, Divine Mind, Intelligence, Fundamental Unity. These terms provide the more explicitly spiritual context of God as Mind. "Spirit-God as the moving force in the universe; Principle as the breath of life in all creation" (RW, p. 183). "God is not a person who has set creation in motion and gone away and left it to run down like a clock. God is Spirit, Infinite Mind, the immanent force and intelligence everywhere manifest" (TT, p. 9). "Substance—the divine idea of the underlying reality of all things. Substance is everywhere present, pervades all things, and inspires to action" (RW, p. 186). "Substance in Divine Mind is an idea of perfection in form" (CH, p. 44).

5. This statement expresses Unity's traditional understanding of the personal dimension of God. Here God is revealed as Parent with both the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God clearly stated.

"Bible authorities say that the Almighty God in Genesis should have been translated El Shaddai--the breasted one. Thus God is found to include both the male and female principle" (MJ, pp. 73-74). "The Mother side of God may be said to cradle our good, nurturing it into manifestation and producing the influences that hover over and enrich our life" (TP, p. 39).

6. Statement 6 builds on statements 2 and 3 and clarifies our position on evil. Here we see the radical distinction between our beliefs and the belief that evil is a real force. "God is good and God is all, hence there can be no real condition but the good" (CH, p. 93). "The status of evil is that of a parasiteApparent evil is the result of ignorance, and when truth is present the error disappears..."(MJ, pp. 4-5 [in "Foreword," unnumbered pages]). "Apparent evils are not entities or things in themselves. They are simply apparent absence of the good, just as darkness is an absence of light. But God, or good, is omnipresent, so the apparent absence of good (evil) is unreal" (LT, pp. 44-45).

7. This statement refers to Divine Mind and introduces the relationship between Spirit and matter. Matter is a limited concept of divine substance. "God is not matter nor confined in any way to the idea of substance termed matter. God is that intangible essence which [humanity] has 'formed' and called matter. Thus matter is a limitation of the divine substance whose vital and inherent character is above all else limitless" (JC, p. 27). "Involution always precedes evolution. That which is involved in mind evolves through matter" (TM, p. 121).

8. Statement 8 introduces the proper term for our understanding of God, the world, ourselves and the relationship of all three. Idealism is the term for a system of belief affirming that mind is primary and omnipotently causative. It is not the naivete of a "Pollyanna," nor is it simplistic optimism. "Every idea projects form. The physical body is the projection of man's idea" (CH, p. 34). "The law of mind action may be described in three steps: mind, idea, manifestation. First, there must be mind; second, everything exists first as an idea in mind; third, the inherent power and intelligence in the idea causes it to act or express, and when it is expressed we have the manifestation" (MBD, p. 396).

9. & 10. These statements introduce the plan and purpose of prayer in Unity. These statements affirm the role, function and character of prayer as necessary for a complete understanding of God and the Universe. Prayer is not just an experience of communion ,but the basis of spiritual advance. This constructive advance is the result of positive, conscious communion, not begging or beseeching. Students may desire to consult Chapter One, on Prayer, in *Living the Life* for an excellent summary of the purpose and practice of prayer in Unity. Charles Fillmore defines prayer

as "communion between God and [persons]. This communion takes place in the innermost part of [one's] being. Prayer is the most highly accelerated mind action known. It steps up mental action until [our] consciousness synchronizes with the Christ Mind. Prayer is the only way to cleanse and perfect the consciousness and thus permanently heal the body" (RW, p. 152). In *Teach Us To Pray*, Charles and Cora (Mr. Fillmore's second wife) write: "Through prayer we gain the intimate relationship with God that Jesus must have enjoyed when He said, 'I and the Father are one'" (TP, p. 19).

II. Christ and Jesus Christ

11. The first statement in this section gives an initial definition of the Christ. This statement summarizes Unity's Idealistic teaching that the Christ is the one complete idea of perfect humanity. "Christ abides in each person as his potential perfection. Jesus Christ, the embodiment of all divine ideas, exists eternally in the mind of Being as the only begotten Son of God, the messiah or the anointed one, and is the living Principle working in man" (RW, p. 34). "Christ is the one complete idea of perfect man in Divine Mind. He is the embodiment of all Divine ideas such as intelligence, life, love, substance and strength" (MBD, p. 150). We call the essence of our spiritual nature the Christ. In Charles Fillmore's original "Statement," he affirmed: "We believe in Christ, the Son of God, in whom is imaged the ideal creation with perfect man [humanity] on the throne of dominion" ("Unity's Statement of Faith," statement 2, p. 1).

12. Here, we find Unity's affirmation that the Christ, as the perfect idea of humanity, is the operative principle of spiritual creation. "This Christ, or perfect man idea existing eternally in Divine Mind, is the true, spiritual, higher self of every individual. Each of us has within him the Christ, just as Jesus had, and we must look within to recognize our sonship, our divine origin and birth, even as he did" (MBD, p. 150). "All that we can say of the one Mind is that it is absolute and that all its manifestations are in essence like itself. This brings us to the true estimate of [humanity], and when we speak of spiritual [humanity], or Christ [self], or [child] of God, we refer to this original expression of Divine Mind" (CH, p. 107).

13. Here the PRUF gives doctrinal support to Unity's Christian self-affirmation. Jesus Christ is cited as Wayshower. It is Jesus Christ whom we follow in regeneration and full spiritual life. "Jesus was the 'first-fruits' of those who are coming out of the mortal into the immortal. He was the type [person], the Way-Shower, and, through following His example and taking on His character as a spiritual-minded [person], we shall come into the same consciousness" (12P, p. 4). The concept

of coming into the "immortal" expressed in this passage from *The Twelve Powers of Man* gives clear expression to the concept of regeneration. Regeneration as understood in Unity is given explicit description in *Christian Healing* in the words of Charles Fillmore. He writes: "...the 'regeneration' of the New Testament [is] a process of body refinement to the point of physical immortality" (CH, pp. 38-39). Regeneration affirms the ideal of physical immortality, an achievable goal that is accomplished through the conscious unity of spirit, soul, and body— a unity that already exists and awaits our realization and demonstration!

III. The Holy Spirit

14. Our fourteenth assertion affirms our teachings about the third person in the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is the third element in our spiritual doctrine. The Holy Spirit is part of God and functions as God's ever-present assistance, aid and help to humanity. The Holy Spirit is the whole Spirit of God in action. "The Holy Spirit is the 'outpouring' or activity of the living Word. The work of the Holy Spirit is the executive power of Father (mind) and Son (idea), carrying out the creative plan. It is through the help of the Holy Spirit that man overcomes. The Holy Spirit reveals, helps, and directs in this overcoming" (ASP, pp. 38-39).

IV. The Trinity

15. & 16. These statements express our teachings about the Trinity (a foundational concept in Christian thought). By recognizing and affirming the traditional Christian understanding, we underscore our claim to being Christian. By recognizing the ideal meaning of the Trinity, we confirm our Idealistic stance. "The Trinity is known commonly as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; metaphysically it is known as Mind, Idea and Expression. These three are one.... Reducing the Trinity to simple numbers takes away much of its mystery. When we say that there is One Being with three attitudes of Mind, we have stated in plain terms all that is involved in the intricate theological doctrine of the Trinity" (CH, p. 20).

V. Humanity

17. This Statement relates the affirmations about the Trinity to humanity and affirms the Truth that spiritual growth requires harmonious working of the three phases of mind (noted in statement 15) with the Christ Mind. "There must be perfect cooperation of the three phases of mind in order to produce the perfect [person]. When we seek the Superconsciousness and make conscious connection with it we harmonize all the forces of mind and body; we lift up the Subconscious until a complete, conscious unification of the three phases of mind is affected and we become established in 'singleness of heart'" (KTL, p. 92).

18. This statement offers a clear definition of heaven. We recognize that heaven specifies an ultimate goal. "Heaven is everywhere present. It is the orderly, lawful adjustment of God's Kingdom in [a person's] mind, body and affairs" (KTL p. 177). "The kingdom of God is within man and we are wasting our time and defeating the work of the Spirit if we look for it anywhere else" (ASP, p. 25).

19. In this statement we clarify the process through which the highest ideal of humanity is achieved. This statement explicitly states what Unity is not. "Jesus was not negative in any of His faculties, and He did not teach a doctrine of submissionIf we fail to exercise faith in things spiritual, we are condemned to the prison of materialityHypnotism, mesmerism, and mediumship are based on the submission of one will to another" (12P, pp. 106, 109). "Any system that suppresses the will is radically wrong" (CH, p. 113).

20. Statement 20 presents Unity's teachings about the second coming, a traditional Christian concept. In Unity, we recognize the first and second comings of the Christ. The first is the recognition that spiritual humanity, the Divine idea of humanity, is the child of God. The second is regeneration, the recognition of the unification of Spirit, soul and body. In this recognition, the body begins a period of refinement and achieves physical and spiritual immortality. We have previously cited Charles Fillmore's definition of regeneration and we repeat it here for the sake of clarity. It is "a process of body refinement to the point of physical immortality" (CH, pp. 38-39). In *The Twelve Powers of Man*, he writes: "[T]he Second Coming is the awakening and the regeneration of the subconscious mind through the superconscious or Christ Mind" (12 P, p. 15).

21. Here our concept of humanity is linked with our concept of Deity. This statement applies the principle expanded in Statement 3 to humankind. "God as Principle is the absolute Good expressed in all creation. When we know God ...we recognize Him as this Great Goodness, which is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, ready and willing to guide, to bless and to uplift" (KTL, p. 9).

22. In this assertion, the role of humanity as Co-creator with God is affirmed. The spiritual work of humanity is vital to the creative work of Divinity. Here, too, we affirm free will and dominion. "[Humanity], being the highest emanation of Divine Mind, has a great directive power and is really co-operator with God in forming the universe" (CH, p. 68). "God-Mind is giving itself to its creations and those creations thus are evolving an independence that has the power to co-operate with or to oppose the original God will" (CH, p. 19). With the recognition and acceptance of our co-creative power, we must also recognize our responsibility. We are "the executive power

in Being and only through [our] willing cooperation can the designs of the true God be carried out. These designs are based on principles that cannot be changed, and [we] must come into such close touch with the wisdom of God that [we] will consciously cooperate in bringing the perfect creation in existence" (KTL, p. 61).

23. This statement affirms our acceptance of one of Jesus' greatest teachings: The Golden Rule. In Unity, we take this great Rule as the basis for all morality and ethics. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Matthew, 7:12). We see that this rule is not limited to humankind, but includes all creation. Therefore, many Unity students have elected to be vegetarian. As persons who have studied the *Unity and History* text know, the Fillmores were committed vegetarians.

VI. The Church

24. Here we affirm our identity as Christians. Unity is a fellowship of persons that seeks to embody the consciousness of Truth. "The true teacher of practical Christianity must be a Christian, a follower of Jesus in all His ways" (MJ, p. 127).

25. In this statement, we recognize our identity as students of Unity in the tradition of the founders of the movement. "The light of the Fillmores has not dimmed though some may claim that the passage of time has weakened its brilliance or that brighter lights have been found. The light is just as bright today. In fact, it is more brilliant now in these times when false-mysticism, contemporary occultism, scientific materialism, and religious institutionalism have sought once again to close the doors that the Fillmores opened wide. We who have studied by their light have found it to be brilliant and beckoning. We seek to follow this light, knowing that 'Light' is intelligence, a spiritual quality. It corresponds to understanding and should precede all activity" (MG., p. 16). Following the light of the Fillmore teachings, we proceed accordingly" (LV, p. 14).

26. Here, we affirm our acceptance of all teachings universally affirmed by Christians. By affirming the authority of universal Christian doctrine, we affirm our unity with others in the Christian faith. In Unity, we interpret Christian doctrine spiritually. As Charles Fillmore wrote in Unity's first "Statement of Faith"—"We believe all doctrines of Christianity spiritually interpreted" ("*Unity's Statement of Faith*," p. 6).

27. This statement affirms our understanding of the role of the Bible in Unity. The Bible is our foundational text. Sometimes we will affirm recognition of *Lessons In Truth* as an equally important spiritual text. We realize that the Bible is a central religious text for all Christians and that Christians have always understood and interpreted the meaning of the Bible in unique and individual ways. In Unity, our primary approach to interpretation is allegorical; this is Christianity's

original and longest practiced method of interpretation.

28. This assertion expresses our non-exclusionary, non-confrontational posture. We recognize that there is no copyright on the Truth, and that all religions carry the message of Spirit in so far as they affirm self-transcendence, spiritual freedom, and absence of submission of the will. "Believe me, just as there is less separation between the spokes of a wheel the nearer they get to the hub, so you will find that the nearer you both come to the perfect Center, which is the Father, the less difference will there be between you and your brother" (LT, p. 130). "We have incorporated into our teachings all the good we have found in all the religions we have studied" (MFM, p. 260); "The same Spirit, always and forever the same, and one God, one Spirit, but in different forms of manifestation" (LT, p. 121).

29. This statement offers the Unity ideal for individuals who are committed to the Unity mission. The statement refers to Statement 20 and the unification of Spirit, soul and body. "The object of man's existence is to demonstrate the Truth of Being" (CH, p. 55). In the "Sermon on the Mount," Jesus is reported to have said: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all the house. Let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16). Mr. Fillmore writes: "We all intuitively know that there is something wrong in a world where poverty, suffering, and sorrow prevail. We would not, any of us, create such a world. We all want to see these things blotted out in this world. This is the index pointing the way to the possibility of doing so. Whatever we see as wrong is for us to right. Lack of health is not prevalent in God's universe, and if such lack appears anywhere it is the work of [humanity], and it is our duty to do away with it" (JCH, p. 134).

30. Here we reaffirm and further explicate the nature of Unity churches (and the specific church that was founded as the U-PC). The understanding of church in Unity recognizes that it is both an inner and an outer assembly. As an inner structure, it is an assembly of thoughts based in Truth that exists in each individual; as an outer structure it is an assembly of persons of like mind. In *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary* we read: "The true Church is not an outer sect, or religious denominations....[I]t is an aggregation of spiritual ideas in individual consciousnessIn its outer sense the church of Christ consists of all persons in whom the consciousness of Truth has become firmly establishedThey comprise that great [fellowship] which Jesus Christ established in Spirit" (MBD, p. 151).

31. This statement connects the general concept of the church in Unity and U-P.C. with the

specific ideals of the movement. Here is given further clarity on our relationship to Charles and Myrtle Fillmore and their Idealistic teachings. We do not go forward blindly; progress is coherent, reasonable and consistent with the tradition of this movement. "The church of God begins its activity in [persons] as a mental perceptionIts work is subjective first; that is, it is a silent interior planting of spiritual ideas..." (MBD, p. 151). "The U-P.C. seeks to express, celebrate, and advance in a sound and coherent manner the foundational spiritual teachings of Unity; those teachings set forth most clearly and expressly in the works of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, and H. Emilie Cady" (LV, p. 15).

32. This statement expresses the fundamental truth that Unity and all Unity works must be free and open assemblies. This must be the primary understanding of all who participate in the expansion of the Unity work. There is no ultimate power or authority in material institutions. Whatever furthers freedom furthers the Unity idea. "The true church of Christ is never organized upon the earth, because the minute that [humankind] organizes [its] religion, [it] ceases to be guided wholly by the free Spirit of truth, and to that extent [it] falls away from the true churchThere can be but one leader for [humanity] in [its] search for God - the Spirit of within [it]" (TT, pp. 109,110). "He [Jesus Christ] has His ideals; they have been sown in the minds of [persons], and will surely come to fruition. He saw a people here on earth with all the powers of the gods, but He did not look to governments, or churches, or industrial movements to bring about the civilization that He planned"(TT, p. 126).

33. Here, Unity students find expression of their religious freedom. Unity must be the most open and free religious assembly in existence. (In the U-PC, the zeal is not for form but for the principle of freedom itself.) "When the mind is perfectly free to search out the higher truths of existence, there flow into the consciousness a vigor and a virility that set in motion all the crystallized thoughts, and fresh life stirs the whole [person]" (TT, p. 104).

34. This statement affirms the three-fold mission of the U-P.C. in a general sense. The three purposes of our "community of spiritual beings" are: 1. to advance the Jesus Christ tradition of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore; 2. to be democratically structured and egalitarian in principle and practice; and, 3. to be excellently educated in Truth principles. In this statement you will find these ideals expressed through reference to integrity in church government, teachings, and education. (See *Libertas et Veritas* (pp. 15-19) for an expanded treatment of the three-fold mission of the U-P.C.)

35. This statement focuses on the necessity of egalitarian democracy in authentic Unity

communities. It offers a specific statement about the polity of the U-P.C. The term egalitarian refers to the Council's empowerment of all members, both clergy and lay, to participate in church government at all levels. Democracy mandates the openness of our structure and allows for the full understanding and participation of the membership body in both policy making and interpretation. "God loves all to the degree that He has poured out His Life and Substance and Intelligence equally with us in the universal scheme" (KTL, p. 32).

36. Here, the PRUF affirms the necessity of clear statements about a religion's teachings and it specifies the PRUF as the organization's Statement of Faith. Recognition of the vital importance of an explicit assertion of Unity's primary beliefs was powerfully affirmed by Charles Fillmore when he decided to publish *Unity's Statement of Faith* in 1921. U-P.C. followed the lead of Unity's co-founder through the publication of the PRUF as a contemporary Statement of Faith for Unity. Mr. Fillmore did not hesitate to articulate Unity's teachings; in fact, he believed that such a stand was necessary. As he wrote: "A statement setting forth the teaching of a religious institution is essential, but compelling clauses should be omitted" (12 P, p. 112). The Council introduced the PRUF as a document setting forth the teaching of the religious institution known as Unity. It is the standard and vehicle for education in the Council. Unity's teachings are doctrinally clear, religiously unified, and spiritually confident; this is witnessed in the PRUF.

37. Specific emphasis on the importance of excellent education is given in this statement. Although explicit reference is made to education of the clergy, the intent is for all Unity students to be excellently educated. This affirms the Council's mission to expand and enrich educational opportunities for all Unity participants. All are called to excellence. It is believed that if the clergy is excellently educated, those whom they teach will also be well-educated in our tradition and teachings.

38. This statement expresses our openness to change according to the guidance of Spirit. The PRUF and all the doctrines of the U-PC were designed to be open to change according to the guidance of Spirit and the inspiration of individual followers. The PRUF is a Unity Statement of Faith intended to be open to democratic mediation and revision. This statement clearly confirmed the truth that the PRUF was not dogma. It was presented in harmony with Mr. Fillmore's assertion that: "A statement setting forth the teaching of a religious institution is essential, but compelling clauses should be omitted" (12 P, p. 112).

39. This statement expresses the acceptance of Christ as Head of our church. Christ is Head of our organization and our lives. "Jesus Christ is still the head of His 'assembly' and its only organization

is in Spirit" (TT, p. 102).

40. The last statement in the PRUF is our thanksgiving. The PRUF is both a doctrinal document, a Unity Statement of Faith, and a prayer. Students will note that the document closes with an affirmation of thanksgiving and the statement of spiritual confirmation, closure, and acceptance: "Amen." With our understanding of *Unity's Foundational Teachings* here presented, we can now turn to Unity's primary textbook: H. Emilie Cady's *Lessons In Truth*.

Unity's Foundational Teachings

Chapter Two

Lessons in Truth Part I

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce H. Emilie Cady, and to offer a synopsis of the first six lessons (chapters) in her text, *Lessons in Truth*. This book is considered Unity's primary textbook, together with the Bible. It has proven to be of great value to Truth students at all levels of spiritual unfoldment. Key topics to be discussed in this chapter include:

1. H. Emilie Cady.
2. The history of the text.
3. *Statement of Being* (Lesson 2 of current edition of *Lessons in Truth*).
4. *Thinking* (Lesson 3 of current edition of *Lessons in Truth*).
5. *Denials* (Lesson 4 of current edition of *Lessons in Truth*).
6. *Affirmations* (Lesson 5 of current edition of *Lessons in Truth*).
7. *Faith* (Lesson 6 of current edition of *Lessons in Truth*).
8. *Definition of Terms* used in Metaphysical Teachings (partially included in Lesson 7, "Personality and Individuality," of current edition of *Lessons in Truth*).

Dr. H. Emilie Cady — Physician and Metaphysician

H. Emilie Cady was born in 1848 in upstate New York into a well-known and respected family. Her pioneer spirit was evident in her choice of career. She began her studies in the field of education, becoming a schoolteacher in her home town of Dryden. Sometime in the 1880's she chose to leave this acceptable profession for women of the day and begin studies to become a physician. She became a doctor of homeopathic medicine and opened a practice in New York City. This was a bold step for a woman to take at this time, yet this boldness was characteristic of women who were attracted to New Thought. Because of her standing as a homeopathic physician, Cady is often referred to as "Doctor."

Like most leaders in the emergent New Thought movement, Cady was a student of Emma Curtis Hopkins, the founder of the New Thought movement. The Truth principles she learned from this “Teacher of teachers” were put into practice as Cady sought to bring healing and wholeness to her patients. She successfully exemplified the value of these teachings and began to share them outside the circle of those who came to her for homeopathic treatment. On her own, she wrote and published a booklet called “*Finding the Christ in Ourselves.*” Myrtle Fillmore read it and was so impressed that she recommended it to Charles. Inspired by what he had read, Charles wrote to Dr. Cady asking permission to print and distribute the article. Dr. Cady was also invited to write for *Unity* magazine. She responded in the affirmative to both requests. Her article, “Finding the Christ in Ourselves” was published and distributed under the Unity banner. In the January 1892 issue of *Unity* magazine, the first of many articles by Dr. Cady appeared. It was entitled, “*Neither Do I Condemn Thee.*”

H. Emilie Cady became a favorite among the readers. A subscriber wrote to Charles Fillmore requesting that a series of lessons outlining the principles of spiritual healing be published. Dr. Cady was among those suggested as the author of such lessons. The Fillmores agreed and made the request known. Although reluctant at first, she did agree. A letter of acceptance appeared in the September 1894 issue of *Unity* magazine. Her choice of words in announcing her intent gives us a clue to the continuing popularity of ***Lessons in Truth***: “I shall not give any stilted or set form of lessons, but just the utter simplicity of the gospel in words that the wayfarer, ‘though a fool,’ may understand; for I believe that to be the need of the hour” (*Unity* magazine, Sept., 1894).

The following month, October 1894, the first lesson appeared. It was entitled, “*Statement of Being: Who and What God is; Who and What Man Is.*” Eleven more lessons appeared, one each month. Each issue of the magazine brought appreciative comments and evidence of increased popularity. Before the last lesson was printed, Mr. Fillmore decided to reprint all twelve lessons in booklet form. They were issued in 1895 as three booklets, each containing four lessons. The cost was twenty-five cents apiece, or seventy-five cents for the set of three.

The content and the clarity of ***Lessons in Truth*** led to it being designated Unity’s primary text, along with the Bible. Dr. Cady’s skill in the presentation of Truth principles also led to an invitation to come to Unity and teach, but she declined. In a letter to Lowell Fillmore (which later became the preface to another book, ***How I Used Truth***) she explained that almost every one of the articles had been “born out of the travail of my soul.” For instance, she reported turning to God in prayer to meet the challenge of financial supply and received the realization of God as All-Sufficiency.

From that time on, she did not charge for her spiritual services; no monthly bills or office charges were ever made. After two years of working to prove the principle, she realized that she herself must speak the word to set the principle of supply in motion. During this period of time, she became financially independent. She trusted God as her Source, and her supply came forth in abundance. Truth students the world over have been inspired through her writings to apply the same principles of Practical Christianity. Her contribution to New Thought continues beyond her transition in 1941. Her legacy, *Lessons in Truth*, originally printed in book form in 1895, has been translated into eleven languages and Braille.

Other works by H. Emilie Cady are: *How I Used Truth* and *God A Present Help*. *How I Used Truth*, published in 1916, is a compilation of articles that had appeared in *Unity* magazine. This book was first titled, *Miscellaneous Writings*. Her first article, “Neither Do I Condemn Thee,” is included in this book. *God A Present Help*, originally published in 1908 by Rogers Bros. of New York City, was revised in 1912. Both books have been published by Unity Books.

The Text

For the purposes of our study, we will refer to the edition published in 1988. This is a hardcover edition with a likeness of Dr. Cady on the cover. Students of *Unity’s Foundational Teachings* who may be referring to *Lessons in Truth* during study of this chapter and the next are advised that this text (1988) has different pagination from other contemporary editions of *Lessons in Truth* (such as the paperback edition of 1990).

Other editions were consulted for comparison and information to assist in our understanding. These editions were published in 1925, 1930, 1955, and 1972. The most interesting is the 1972 edition, because it is a facsimile of the original book. It was printed from the original plates without any attempt to correct typographical errors or broken type. The frontispiece reads, “Except for the study guide at the end of this book, what you hold in your hand is the authentic, original *Lessons in Truth*, exactly as it came from Dr. Cady’s pen almost ninety years ago.” (Just after the printing of the facsimile text, both Connie Fillmore, great granddaughter of the Founders, and Leddy Hammock, both recent college graduates at that time, were hired to serve on the Editorial Staff of *Unity* magazine under Editor, James A. Decker. When readers pointed out that a couple of statements of the original text appeared racist and inappropriate in the culture of the 1970’s, all remaining copies of the facsimile edition were destroyed, due to this oversight. At that time, it seems, even senior Correspondence School teachers were unfamiliar with the 1895 edition.)

There is evidence of revision in all of the editions when compared to the facsimile. Sometime between the original edition and the 1925 edition, the paragraphs were numbered. It has been suggested that the reason for this was the inclusion of material in a Correspondence Course that was begun in 1906. The 1955 edition notes that the book was revised in 1953. The most obvious change noted was the placement of the lesson, “*Bondage or Liberty, Which?*” as the first lesson instead of the last lesson as in Dr. Cady’s placement. The rationale for changing the placement of this lesson was that understanding of the lessons required one to decide to accept what was offered at the outset. In other words, to choose between bondage or liberty in order to be receptive to the truths presented. It was, however, apparently Dr. Cady’s intention that this decision be a result of the truths learned during the course of study rather than an initial acceptance on the reader’s part. So, “*Bondage or Liberty, Which?*” was her final chapter, rather than the first as is now the case.

Another obvious change was the renaming of the lesson, “*Definition of Terms*” to “*Personality and Individuality*.” This was a result of the removal of the terms “*Thought Transference*” and “*Chemicalization*” and their explanations from the body of the text, thus leaving only the terms represented by the new title. Information concerning these terms and changes will be discussed in the text in the order in which they occur.

Our study will follow the original sequence of lessons, better to understand Dr. Cady’s ideas, but we will note the Lesson numbers in the current editions for clarity of reference. Please note that the first lesson we will discuss is found as Lesson Two in the current edition of *Lessons in Truth*. The last Lesson we discuss (in chapter three of *Unity’s Foundational Teachings*) will correspond to Lesson One in the current edition. This overview is not meant to be an exegesis of the text, but by using quotes from the lessons we will offer a sketch of the principles presented. We use Dr. Cady’s own words, for they best explain her thoughts. They are so clear and expressive that to use others would be to lose something of the character and meaning of her original inspiration. Students may desire to acquire a copy of *Lessons in Truth* to study as a complement to this text. Again, please note, the text to which we will be referring in our study will be the 1988 (hardcover) edition. Citations from *Lessons in Truth* given in this text follow the chapter and paragraph divisions of current editions of *Lessons in Truth*. For example, a citation ending with (1.5) would refer to Lesson One, paragraph five of current editions of *Lessons in Truth*, beginning: “Today, and all days...”(1.5). A citation ending with (2.5) would refer to the paragraph beginning: “God is not a being...”(2.5).

Lesson 1 “*Statement of Being*” (appears as Lesson Two in current editions)

In this lesson, we find the Unity teachings of Who and What God is and who and what we are. Paragraphs 1-14 define God. Cady states, “God is Spirit, or the creative energy that is the cause of all visible things” (2.4). “God is that invisible, intangible, but very real, something we call life. God is perfect love and infinite power.... the total of all good” (2.5).

Unity’s classic definitions of God are found in this lesson. “God is power. Not simply God has power, but God is power. In other words, all the power there is to do anything is God. God, the source of our existence every moment, is not simply omnipotent (all-powerful); He is omnipotence (all power). He is not alone omniscient (all-knowing); He is omniscience (all knowledge). He is not only omnipresent, but more—omnipresence [everywhere present]. God is not a being having qualities, but He is the good itself. Everything you can think of that is good, when in its absolute perfection, goes to make up that invisible Being we call God” (2.11). With support from Dr. Cady’s definition, we add a fourth “O,” Omnibenevolence, the Good Itself. Students will note that these four “omni” terms are offered as Unity’s traditional definition of God as cited, for example, in the PRUF document (see PRUF, number 2).

Paragraphs 15-18 define humanity. “[Humanity] is the last and highest manifestation of divine energy, the fullest and most complete expression (or pressing out) of God” (2.15). “[A person] is a threefold being made up of Spirit, soul and body. Spirit, our innermost real being, the absolute part of us, the I of us, has never changed though our thoughts and circumstances may have changed hundreds of times” (2.18).

In paragraphs 19-26 Dr. Cady shows the relationship of God to humanity. She establishes the Truth in a logical sequence. First, there is God, defined as Omnibenevolence, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, Omniscience, and that this Being is at the central part of every being. Each of us is a portion of God brought out into manifestation. Therefore, no separation can exist between God and creation. “God is the name that we give to that unchangeable, inexorable principle, at the source of existence. To the individual consciousness God takes on personality... a personal, loving, all-forgiving Father-Mother” (2.23). “The hunger of everyone is only the cry of the homesick child for its Father-Mother God. It is only the Spirit’s desire in us to come forth into our consciousness as more and more perfection, until we shall have become fully conscious of our oneness with all-Perfection. [Humanity] never has been and never can be satisfied with anything less” (2.24). Students are referred to statement five in the PRUF document for Unity’s doctrinal assertion regarding the use of parental terms in reference to deity.

Lesson 2 “*Thinking*” (appears as Lesson Three in current editions)

This lesson establishes the Truth of one Mind. The distinction between a religion based on Idealism and one based on Materialism is no more powerfully presented than in this lesson. It is a masterpiece in both its clarity and its simplicity.

She begins by reminding readers of what they have learned in the previous lesson. She then introduces the premise of Christian Idealism and a possible objection: “When we say there is but one Mind in the entire universe, and that this Mind is God, some persons, having followed understandingly the first lesson, and recognized God as the one Life, one Spirit, one Power, pushing Himself out into various degrees of manifestation through persons and things, will at once say: Yes, that is all plain” (3.2). “But someone else will say: ‘If all the mind there is, is God, then how can I think wrong thoughts, or have any but God thoughts?’” (3.3). She answers this question by presenting the concept of free will. “There is in reality only one Mind in the universe; and yet there is a sense in which we are individual, or separate, a sense in which we are free wills and not puppets”(3.5).

Dr. Cady explains the difference between Divine Mind and mortal mind. “Mortal mind, the term so much used, as so distracting to many, is the error consciousness which gathers its information from the outside world through the five senses”(3.8). “The Spirit within you is Divine Mind, the real mind” (3.9).

She goes on to say that it is an utter impossibility to crowd the Infinite into your intellectual capacity and you will err in spiritual understanding if the intellect does not give way. She writes this book for those who will seek as little children, who like Paul believe that “the foolishness of God is wiser than men” (1 Cor. 1:25) and that each has direct access to all there is in God; not by intellect, but by directly seeking the Spirit of Truth. She urges us to stop reading books and considering them to be the source of all Truth. In a most mystical directive, she advocates that each of us should seek the revelation of Truth in our own soul. “Seek light from the Spirit of Truth within you. Go alone. Think alone. Seek light alone”(3.20). “Still the intellect for the time being, and let universal Mind speak to you; and when it speaks, though it be but a ‘still small voice’ you will know what it says is Truth”(3.22). “How will you know? You will know just as you know you are alive” (3.23). In these lines, Cady’s language reminds us of the rhetoric of her teacher, the author of *High Mysticism*, Emma Curtis Hopkins.

At this point in the text, she explains the power of thought. She does not address her explanation of Idealism (the concept of like attracting like or the causative power of thought) to critical or incredulous “intellectuals.” Instead, she presents her explanation with a simplicity that even children could grasp. In fact, she affirms that a child who has truly learned and affirmed the meaning of “Our Father,” can be understood to be “infinitely greater than the most intellectual man [or woman] who has not yet learned it” (3.27). Developing the basis of Idealism, she continues: “It does make a great difference in our daily lives what we think about God, about ourselves, about our neighbors. Heretofore, through ignorance of our real selves and of the results of our thinking, we have let our thoughts flow at random. Our minds have been turned toward the external of our being, and nearly all our information has been gotten through our five senses. We have thought wrong because misinformed by these senses, and our troubles and sorrows are the results of our wrong thinking”(3.28). Introducing the practical dimension of Unity’s Idealism, she admonishes: “...try thinking true, right thoughts awhile, and see what the result will be” (3.30). When we keep our thoughts right and dwell on the good in all, “the apparent evil will first drop out of your thoughts and then out of your life” (3.38). How do we do this? PRACTICE. “We can all learn how to turn the conscious mind toward Universal Mind, or Spirit within us. We can, by practice, learn how to make this every day, topsy-turvy, ‘mind of flesh’ be still and let the mind that is God (all-wisdom, all-love) think in us and out through us” (3.39).

Paragraphs 50-54 offer a “recapitulation” of the key facts presented in this lesson. It is an excellent “refresher” on Idealism for all Unity students.

Lesson 3 “*Denials*” (Lesson Four in current editions of *Lessons in Truth*)

Building on the last lesson, Dr. Cady presents tools to be used in the spiritualizing of the mind. As a preface, she offers an admonition from the Gospel of Matthew, “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, ‘If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me’” (Matthew 16:24). She begins the chapter with the assertion: “All systems for spiritualizing the mind include denial” (4.1). Most take the form of some outer denial, but the denial Dr. Cady presents is different. She tells us that humanity has always felt that external conditions were the only things to bring happiness, and that when we see that this is not so, when we become destitute of any real joy, we turn to God. We learned in the last Lesson that there is a Christ self of us, but

there is also the “human self, a carnal mind, which reports lies from the external world and is not to be relied upon fully; this is the self of which Jesus spoke when He said, ‘Let him deny himself’ (4.6). Notice, again, the distinction between Materialism and Idealism.

The Idealist premise is the basis of the Unity’s practice of “Practical Christianity.” With this understanding, Cady affirms that Idealism’s realization of the power of thought, which was taught in the last lesson, gives us the opportunity to change “our troublesome circumstances and bodily conditions” (4.8). Those who study the mind have found evidence that false beliefs can cause troubles in life. “One of the methods they found will work every time in getting rid of troublesome conditions ...is to deny them in toto: First to deny that any such things have the power to make us unhappy; second, to deny that these things do in reality exist at all” (4.9).

“To deny oneself, then, is not to withhold comfort or happiness from the external [person], much less to inflict torture upon [the person], but it is to deny the claims of error consciousness, to declare these claims to be untrue” (4.10). “The appearances are that our bodies and our circumstances control our thoughts, but the opposite is true. Our thoughts control our bodies and our circumstances” (4.16).

“There are four common error thoughts to which nearly everyone grants great powerThey can be denied like this:

First: There is no evil.

Second: There is no absence of life, substance or intelligence anywhere.

Third: Pain, sickness, poverty, old age, and death cannot master me, for they are not real.

Fourth: There is nothing in all the universe for me to fear, for greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world” (4.20-26).

These denials have become classics in the Unity tradition. Together with the classic affirmations (given in the next chapter), they have been memorized by countless numbers of Unity students. In paragraphs 33-43, she offers examples of the practical application of denials. Dr. Cady tells us to repeat these denials (and we note, followed by affirmations) several times daily, without anxiety (4.28), and “calmly and coolly” (4.33). They may be “spoken silently or audibly” (4.42).

Students are reminded, however, that the words alone are not in themselves sufficient in spiritual treatment. They must be fully realized, spiritually understood, and consciously accepted. And just as a note, the denials given by Dr. Cady are best understood as examples rather than rigid codes. Even as we learn and use Cady’s examples, perhaps even in the “mechanical” (4:43) manner

she suggests, we are also encouraged to formulate our own individual denials, ones that are appropriate for our own experiences and demonstrations. Remember: “Denial brings freedom from bondage, and happiness comes when we can effectually deny the power of anything to touch or trouble us” (4.37).

New Unity students often are challenged by the concept of spiritual Denial, perhaps in part because of the current vogue in popular psychology and the self-help movement that militates against any seeming non-confrontation or non-admission of personal challenges or “issues.” As pop-psychology tells us and as so many of us know, “Denial is not a river in Egypt.” Unity, from Cady and the Fillmores onward, does not advocate dismissing or avoidance of seeming challenges that may manifest in a person’s life experience. Rather, Unity advocates spiritual confrontation and recognition of those elements that call for healing and resolution. When this is done, the Truth student evinces maturity and spiritual health; but recognition of our challenges is not enough! Truth calls to us to overcome, and the spiritual process of overcoming begins with the spiritual practice known as Denial and Affirmation.

Denial in the Unity sense does not mean non-confrontation, non-admission, or evasion of a challenge. Rather, it means recognition of the seeming challenge and REALIZATION that it can be overcome. It is a serious and constructive application of the Divine Principle that is behind our Idealism. There is no Truth in ANY seeming limitation. “There is nothing in all the universe for me to fear, for greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world” (4:26). Spiritual Denial is the beginning of spiritual healing. It is not a “cop-out.” Although we suspect that many psychologists (pop and otherwise) may not now agree with our understanding of spiritual Denial (mostly due to their professional commitment to a negative connotation of the term), we also know that many do understand and applaud Unity’s use of Denial and in time we know that the entire mental healing community (of which the professional psychological family is part) will embrace this method as healthy, healing, and empowering.

Indeed, Denial is not a river in Egypt. Allegorically interpreted, Egypt is bondage to matter; and spiritual Denial sets us free from all such bondage – it has nothing to do with Egypt or its famous river (although the pun is recognized). Spiritual Denial brings us to the Promised Land. “Pain, sickness, poverty, old age, and death cannot master me, for they are not real” (4.250). It sets us free and gives us life. Its helpmate is Affirmation.

Lesson 4 "Affirmations" (Lesson Five in current editions)

Another tool presented in the spiritualization of the mind is affirmation. "To affirm anything is to assert positively that it is so, even in the face of contrary evidence" (5.6). The example of Job in the opening of this lesson gives us the key to this power. We can "decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee" (Job 22:27). This is an infallible and unchanging law. We speak the word and we hold God by His own unalterable laws to do the establishing. Affirmations, like denials, are repeated until they condition the mind to the Truth. There are four sweeping affirmations of Truth:

"First: God is life, love, intelligence, substance, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence. [Note the Council's helpful addition of omnibenevolence to this list.]

Second: I am a child or manifestation of God, and every moment His life, love, wisdom, power flow into and through me. I am one with God, and am governed by His law.

Third: I am Spirit, perfect, holy, harmonious. Nothing can hurt me or make me sick or afraid, for Spirit is God, and God cannot be sick, hurt or afraid. I manifest my real self through this body now.

Fourth: God works in me to will and to do whatsoever He wishes me to do and He cannot fail" (5.13-28).

Dr. Cady stresses the importance of these truths. "Commit these affirmations to memory, so that you can repeat them in the silence of your own mind in any place and at any time.... It is as though the moment you assert emphatically your oneness with God the Father, there is instantly set into motion all the power of omnipotent love to rush to your rescue. And when it has undertaken to work for you, you can cease from external ways and means and boldly claim: 'It is done; I have the desires of my heart'" (5.29).

Paragraphs 29-39 show the proper use of denials and affirmations and provide practical application. "Denials have an erasive tendency ...affirmations build up and give strength, courage and power" (5.35). "Deny the appearance of evil; affirm good. Deny weakness; affirm strength. Deny any undesirable condition, and affirm the good you desire" (5.37). "So always this principle will work in the solution of all life's problems-I care not what the form of detail is-to free us, God's children, from all undesirable conditions, and to bring good into our lives, if we will take up the

simple rules and use them faithfully, until they lead us into such realization of our Godhood that we need no longer consciously depend on them" (5.39).

Remember: Denial and Affirmation is a spiritual process based on the principle of Idealism, which asserts that Mind is primary and causative.

Lesson 5 "*Faith*" (Lesson Six in current editions)

Paragraphs 1-12 offer a general exposition of faith using the Epistle to the Hebrews, Chapter 11 as support. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). "In other words, faith takes right hold of the substance of the things desired, and brings into the world of evidence the things that before were not seen" (6.5).

The differences between blind faith and understanding faith are presented in paragraphs 12-15. "Blind faith is an instinctive trust in a power higher than ourselves. Understanding faith is based on immutable principle" (6.12). "Faith does not depend upon physical facts, or on the evidence of the senses, because it is born of intuition, or the Spirit of truth, ever living at the center of our being" (6.13). "Intuition is the open end, with one's own being, with the invisible channel ever connecting each individual with God" (6.14). Notice again the profound mysticism in this evocation of the principles of religious and spiritual life. Note also the Christian and Idealistic tenor of these passages.

Cady tells us that blind faith, if persisted in, will bring results. But, it is understanding faith that is based on law. The mental and spiritual world or realms are governed by laws that are just as real and unailing as the laws that govern the natural world. "Certain conditions of mind are so connected with certain results that the two are inseparable" (6.18). "God is the substance of all things, the real thing within every visible form of good" (6.20). "This Good (God) substance all about us is unlimited, and is itself the supply of every demand that can be made, of every need that exists in the visible world" (6.22).

Paragraphs 27-39 explicate the connection of understanding faith and desire. "Desire in the heart is always God tapping at the door of your consciousness with His infinite supply, a supply that is forever useless unless there be a demand for it.... 'Desire for anything is the thing itself in incipency'; that is the thing you desire is not only for you, but has already been started toward you out of the heart of God; and it is the first approach of the thing itself striking you that makes you desire it, or even think of it at all" (6.30).

Besides knowing the law of supply and demand there is something else very important in bringing forth the desire of our hearts- trust. Believe that you receive and you will receive. "The next condition that goes hand and hand with faith is to begin and to continue to rejoice, and thank Him that you have (not will have) the desires of your heart, never losing sight of the fact that desire is the thing itself in incipency" (6.34). You do not and cannot desire that which belongs to another" (6.36). "So you do not in reality desire anything that belongs to your neighbor.... No man must needs have less that another may have more. Your very own awaits you. Your understanding faith, or trust, is the power that will bring it to you" (6.37).

Lesson 6 "*Definition of Terms Used in Metaphysical Teachings*"

(portions of this Lesson appear under the title of "*Personality and Individuality*," Lesson Seven in current editions)

In the original text of *Lessons in Truth*, this lesson included definitions of technical terms that Dr. Cady felt were confusing to those who had not previously studied religious Idealism (or "metaphysics" as it was called in her era and sometimes still today). The lesson in the current edition is entitled, "*Personality and Individuality*," for those were the only terms that were not removed from the text.

The terms removed were "thought transference" and "chemicalization." This revision was the result of concern that these concepts might not be understood and it would be better to delete them than to cause confusion. In this chapter, we will include all the terms with definitions and explanations in order to promote understanding. The current lesson is considerably shorter than the original due to the absence of the sections that dealt with "thought transference" and "chemicalization." Students who are interested in the original version of the lesson may try to acquire a copy of the 1972 Facsimile edition (noted in the earlier section, "The Text") for further details on these two most interesting subjects.

Thought transference, as explained by Dr. Cady, refers to the "sending of thought from one person's mind to another without using either written or audibly spoken words ...people are learning that they can ...project the silent thought of their own mind out through space to another mind that the latter can inwardly hear or receive the message ...It is a sort of mental telegraphy, and is called telepathy" (TT, 1972 Facsimile edition, p. 58). She had no doubt that such a thing could be done. However, she cautioned that we have no right to use this power to get others to carry out any plan

we have for them. We cannot know what is the right thing for any individual for only the Spirit within knows what God has for each [person] to be, do, or receive. Cady says, "You have no right to interpose yourself between [an other] and the God in [the other's] soul; no right to steal silently into the inner portals of [an other's] being to turn [the other] one way or another. Remember, the wrong you thus do another will invariably react upon yourself." The only right you have is to call out (to see and acknowledge) the divine self of another.

Chemicalization is the term used to describe the reaction that takes place when, "there has been a clash between the old condition—which was based on falsehood, fear and wrong ways of thinking—and the new thought or Truth entering into you. The old mortal is kicking vigorously against the Truth. You have a feeling of discouragement or of fear, a feeling such as one would have if caught at something disreputable" (LT, 1972 Facsimile edition, p. 61). Something higher and better is always the result of this condition.

Curiously, although the term and its fine explication were removed from *Lessons in Truth*, the term appears again with a definition in *The Revealing Word*, a lexicon of terms used in Unity literature, which was posthumously compiled from the writings of Charles Fillmore. The definition of chemicalization as given in *The Revealing Word* is derived in considerable part from Charles Fillmore's *Mysteries of Genesis*. The complete passage from *Mysteries of Genesis*, from which an edited and less satisfactory version was derived to serve in the definition of "chemicalization" in *The Revealing Word*, reads as follows: "The mind of [humanity or a person] is constantly at work, and this work results in the production of thought forms. These thought forms assume individual definiteness; they take on personality. They are aggregated into a composite mind, which words out into the body. Whenever a new idea is introduced into the mind, the personality is disturbed. It resists; but the spiritual idea is always more powerful than the personal, and with this resistance come more or less commotion in consciousness" (MG, p. 71). Through the use of Denials and Affirmations, error thought is removed from our consciousness and the challenge of chemicalization overcome.

In current editions of *Lessons in Truth*, paragraphs 1-11 introduce and define the terms Personality and Individuality. "Personality applies to the human [mortal] part of you - the person, the externalIt is the outer, changeable [person], in contradistinction to the inner or real [identity]" (7.5). "Individuality is the term used to denote the real [self]" (7.6). "One's individuality is that part of one that never changes identity. It is the God self. It is that which distinguishes one person from another. One's personality may become like that of others with whom one associates.

Individuality never changes" (7.9). "We cultivate individuality by listening to the 'still small voice' (1 Kings 19:12) down deep within us, and boldly following itWe cultivate personality ...by listening to the voices outside ourselves and by being governed by selfish motives, instead of the highest within us. Seek always to cultivate, or to bring into visibility, individuality, not personality. In proportion as one increases, the other must decrease" (7.11).

Paragraphs 12-22 provide practical examples and affirmations to use to cultivate individuality. "[A] pronounced individuality simply means more of God come forth into visibility through a person, and by some mind process it has a power to call forth more of God through you" (7.13). "Always remember that personality is of the human and individuality is of God. Silently affirm your own individuality, your oneness with God, and your superiority to personality" (7.15). "There is no personality in the universe, there is nothing but God" (7.18).

Unity's Foundational Teachings

Chapter Three

Lessons in Truth Part II

*This chapter continues the synopsis of **Lessons in Truth**. The lessons presented here contain the terms and language used by Dr. Cady in her original series. Please note that we are continuing our study in the original order published in 1895, as noted in Chapter Two of this text, and using the 1988 edition of **Lessons in Truth**. Therefore, the last lesson we outline in this text ("**Bondage or Liberty, Which?**") is the first found in the current edition of **Lessons in Truth**. Key topics to be discussed in this chapter include:*

1. *Spiritual Understanding* (Lesson 8 of current edition of **Lessons in Truth**).
2. *The Secret Place of the Most High* (Lesson 9 of current edition of **Lessons in Truth**).
3. *Finding the Secret Place* (Lesson 10 of current edition of **Lessons in Truth**).
4. *Spiritual Gifts* (Lesson 11 of current edition of **Lessons in Truth**).
5. *Unity of the Spirit* (Lesson 12 of current edition of **Lessons in Truth**).
6. *Bondage or Liberty, Which?* (Lesson 1 of current edition of **Lessons in Truth**).
7. Coda.

Lesson 7 "*Spiritual Understanding*" (appears as Lesson Eight in current editions)

Cady opens the lesson with a study of the idea of understanding. Paragraphs 1-9 offer definitions and reflections on spiritual understanding and as she notes, "All the foregoing lessons have been steppingstones leading up to the point where [persons] may realize the ever-abiding inner presence of the Most High, God" (8.9). Spiritual understanding is equivalent to spiritual realization (e.g.: 8.8, 8.11, 8.15) and the "revelation of Truth" (see 8.5). Further, "understanding is a spiritual birth, a revelation of God within the heart of [humanity]" (8.2). It is this understanding that we seek. No one can impart this understanding to another; it comes through grace and receptivity. "The coming of the Comforter to their [the disciples'] hearts and lives, giving them power over every form of sin, sickness, sorrow, and even death itself, is exactly what we mean by understanding or realization" (8.8).

Paragraph 10 introduced a most important concept in Unity's teachings, "the silence." The Silence will be explored more fully in Lesson 10, "*Finding the Secret Place*." Here Cady explains: "I cannot reveal God to you. You cannot reveal God to anotherThe new birth takes place in the silence, in the invisible" (8.10). Paragraphs 11-14 offer scriptural support for the notion we alone can seek and find understanding for ourselves. This is a most important understanding. New Unity students often believe that they are called to bring others to the Truth; that they must preach, teach, heal, convince, or otherwise cajole others into accepting the teachings and doctrines of Unity. This is not the Unity way. In Unity we let go and let God. "I cannot reveal God to you. You cannot reveal God to anotherThe new birth takes place in the silence, in the invisible" (8.10).

The deep, foundational basis of spiritual understanding is the mystical realization that back of all personal desires is the transcendent desire to know and demonstrate more of God (Good). This revelation is a primary emphasis in Cady's book and in Unity's traditional teachings. Remember statement 3 in the PRUF : "We believe in the singular supremacy and eternity of Good. There is but one Presence and one Power everywhere: Good. We know this Good to be God. We believe that the full realization of Good is the one and only objective of humanity and of all things visible and invisible" (PRUF, statement 3). Cady explains that turning to God to satisfy our personal desires is laudable; it "is a step in the right direction" (8.15); but the pursuance of outer desires, as important and necessary as it may be, still is but a partial expression of the transcendent desire for the good (God) itself (8.15). It is the pursuit of the good (God) itself that is the great adventure of spiritual humanity. To know it is God for which we seek, to realize that it is the Good itself for which we aspire, to recognize that back of all other desires is the transcendent desire to know and demonstrate more of God, the Good omnipotent; to know, realize, and recognize these truths (which are really only different expressions of one great Truth) is to get a sense of what Cady and Unity mean by spiritual understanding. You will find this type of explication of spiritual understanding presented in various ways throughout *Lessons in Truth*. As she noted earlier:

"The hunger of everyone for satisfaction is only the cry of the homesick child for its Father-Mother God. It is only Spirit's desire in us to come forth into our consciousness as more and more perfection, until we shall have become fully conscious of our oneness with All-Perfection. [Humanity] never has been and never can be satisfied with anything less." (2.24)

You have seen such statements earlier, and they will echo throughout the rest of the book. See for example: 4.18, 5.1, 5.3, 5.30, 6.20, 6.27, 6.29, and here in 8.15. See also passages at: 9.3, 10.6-8, 10.26-27, 11.7-8, 11.26-27. Desire for a partial revelation of God, such as health, is fulfilled through

earnest seeking, but we will ultimately desire "good that [we] may have more to give out, knowing that as good (God) flows through [us] to others it will make [us] 'every whit whole' (John 7:23)" (8.15).

She continues: "You will be conscious of a new and diviner life in your body, and a new and diviner love for all people, and new and diviner power to accomplish" (8.23). "This is spiritual understanding. This is a flash of the Most High within your consciousness" (8.24). Spiritual understanding also brings us into right relationship with others. As Cady notes: "Faithful service for others hastens the day dawning for us ...while spiritual understanding is in reality a 'gift of God,' it comes to us more or less quickly in proportion as we use the light that we already have" (8.28). "It is our business to keep both the inlet and outlet open, and God's business to keep the stream flowing in and through us" (8.35). "We expand, as we go on step by step in spiritual insight, until in the fullness of time-which means when we have grown spiritually up to the place where God sees that we are able to bear the many things-we receive the desire of our hearts, understanding" (8.36).

Remember, spiritual understanding is a mystical discovery. It is the realization, revelation, and understanding that all desires are not only the "thing itself in incipency," but also the sign and symbol of that high, self-transcending desire to know and demonstrate the Truth of Being - God, the Good Omnipotent!

Lesson 8 "*The Secret Place of the Most High*" (Lesson Nine in current editions)

This Lesson continues the inquiry into the explicitly mystical dimension of our teachings that was begun in the previous Lesson. Paragraphs 1-10 define the secret place and present the desire of all humanity for such a place. Students will note again the concept of the higher (transcendental) desire that lies back of all mortal/material desires (9.1-3).

In the third paragraph she writes: "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" (9.3). The meeting place between God and humanity is "a secret place because it is a place of meeting between the Christ at the center of your being, and your consciousness-a hidden place into which no outside person can either induct you or enter himself" (9.6). "'The secret place of the Most High' (Psalms, 91.1), where each one of us may dwell and be safe from all harm or fear of evil, is the point of mystical union between

man and Spirit (or God in us) wherein we no longer believe, but know, that God in Christ abides always at the center of our being as our perfect health, deliverance, prosperity, power, ready to come forth into manifestation at any moment we claim it" (9.10).

In paragraphs 11-21, Cady presents the process required to understand and enter into the secret place. "We want the manifestation to us of the Father in us, so that we can know Him personally. We want to be conscious of God working in usWe have been learning how to do the outworking, but have now come to a point where we must learn more of how to place ourselves in an attitude where we can each be conscious of the divine inner working" (9.14). Here again, Cady stresses the importance of self-reliance in our pursuit of spiritual realization. She writes: "In our eagerness we have waited upon every source that we could reach for the light we want. Because we have not known how to wait upon Spirit within us for the desired revelation" (9.20). "Books and lectures are good, teachers are good, but you must learn for yourself that Christ, the Son [Child] of God, lives in you.." (9.21).

Paragraphs 22-33 remind the readers of the requirement of balance between prayer and action. This admonition has been with Christians from the beginning of the religion.

Lesson 9 "*Finding the Secret Place*" (Lesson Ten in current editions)

This lesson is the instruction manual for attaining the silence, that mystical locus beyond space and time that is the spiritual milieu of the secret place. Dr. Cady reminds us that, "Our desire, great as it is, is only God's desire in us" (10.3). "Only let it. Learn how to let it" (10.5). "More of Himself in our consciousness, then, is what we all want, no matter what other name we may give it" (10.8).

Comparison with the facsimile edition of 1972 shows evidence of revision in this lesson. The purpose of these revisions is consistent with the editor's desire to provide information free of confusion. The portions removed from the current edition are presented here in italics for your information. The following was originally found between the current paragraphs 12 and 13:

There are those who are quite able to still their minds from all outside thoughts, but who, as soon as they get still, find themselves floating out on the astral or psychical plane where spirits of those departed, appear to them, wanting recognition and communication. Right here is a tremendous temptation. The experience is a new one and is more or less fascinating, but if you want the highest that is for you, this should not be for a moment

yielded to. If, when you begin to get still you find this taking place, get up resolutely and shake it off. Declare it is not what you want; you want the highest spiritual illumination and will not take any other or be intruded upon. If necessary, in order to free yourself, postpone your sitting until another time, when perhaps you will have no trouble. The psychical is all good upon its own plane, but it is not that which you are seeking. You want your own Spirit brought forth, in all its glorious fullness and God-likeness, into manifestation. And if you stop on a lower plane to dabble with things there, it will only retard the day of your own realization and manifestation. Put it down at once and it will soon cease to trouble you.

Cady continues in her instruction, describing the silence as an attentive yet passive state, not entirely unlike the Taoist concept of *wu wei*: "Sitting in the silence is not merely a sort of lazy drifting. It is a passive, but a definite, waiting upon God" (10.13). "Speaking directly to the Father centers your mind on the Eternal" (10.14). "While you are thus concentrating your thoughts on God, in definite conversation with the author of your being, no outside thought images can possibly rush in to torment or distract you" (10.16). "Of course there is to be no set form of words used" (10.17). Whatever words you choose, "repeat the words many times ...with the quietness and assurance of a child speaking to his [or her] loving [parent]" (10.18). The portion of text that has been removed from paragraph 20 affirms the spiritual importance of the physical body; it reads: "Infinite Wisdom has planted us right in (or with) this earth, the body. He saw that our progress towards conscious perfection would at this stage of our growth be better promoted by an experience through an earthly body than any other way." In the existing text, we find: "We are not to reach out away from the body even after the Son of righteousness. We are rather to be still, and let the Son shine on us right where we are" (10.20). "If you find your mind wandering, bring it right back ...do not look for signs and wonders, but just be still and know that everything you want is flowing in and will come forth into manifestation either at once or a little farther on" (10.23).

She provides encouragement to those who will read this lesson and begin their pursuit of the silence. "Even if at first you are not conscious of having received anything from God, do not worry or cease from your thanksgiving" (10.24). "Do not let waiting in the silence become a bondage to you" (10.25). "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— a creature possessing consciously His very own qualities and powers" (10.30). She is positive, empowering, and direct in her instructions as she writes: "Clear revelation—the word made alive

as Truth to the consciousness-must come to every person who continues to wait upon God. But, remember, there are two conditions imposed. You are to wait upon God, not simply to run in and out but to abide, to dwell in the 'secret place of the Most High'" (10.32). "[Y]our mind shall be continually in an attitude of waiting upon God ...of listening for the Father's voice and expecting a manifestation of the Father to your consciousness" (10.33). "The second indispensable condition to finding the secret place and abiding in it is for each of us to know that "my expectation is from Him (Psalms 62:5)" (10.35).

Lesson 10 "*Spiritual Gifts*" (Lesson Eleven in current editions)

This lesson contains many quotations from scripture to support the teachings presented. Paragraphs 1-4 introduce the concept of spiritual gifts. Paragraphs 5-9 highlight the most sought after gift, healing. "Healing of the body is beautiful and good. Power to heal is a divine gift, and as such you are fully justified in seeking it. But God wants to give you infinitely more"(11.7). "Healing is truly a 'branch' of the 'vine' (John 15:4), but it is not the only branch. There are many branches, all of which are necessary to the perfect vine, which is seeking through you and me to bear much fruit" (11.9). Here Cady is affirming the Truth that physical healing is only part of the regeneration process. Remember: Spirit seeks to manifest itself in us as all sufficiency in all things.

Paragraphs 10-20 cite other gifts as the manifestation of Spirit. "These works will be done without effort on your part, because they will be God, omnipotent, omniscient, manifesting Himself through you in His own chosen direction" (11.11). "The same Spirit, always and forever the same, and one God, one Spirit, but in different forms of manifestations" (11.13). "Thus Paul enumerates some of the free gifts of the Spirit to those who will not limit the manifestations of the Holy One, but yield themselves to Spirit's desire within them" (11.15).

Paragraphs 21-37 encourage guidance by Spirit and cultivation of our own gifts:"Turn to the divine presence within yourself Wait upon God quietly, earnestly, but constantly and trustingly, for days—aye weeks, if need be! Let Him work in you and sooner or later you will spring up into a resurrected life of newness and power that you never before dreamed of" (11.24). Presenting one of Unity's most important and beloved rediscoveries of Christian thought and life, she continues: "Oh, do not let us longer fear our God, who is all good, and who longs only to make us each one a [spiritual] giant instead of a [spiritual] pygmy!" (11.26). She concludes: "Follow your own right course without concern for others" (11.36-37).

Lesson 11 "*Unity of the Spirit*" (Lesson Twelve in current editions)

Continuing the theme of "higher calling," this lesson encourages the student to know that all humanity is seeking after God. She cautions against narrow, sectarian views. "Did we not know it is as a living reality that behind all ...stands forever the master Mind" (12.1). "Each one looking at the same world sees according to the size of the aperture through which he [or she] is looking, and he [or she] limits the world to just his [or her] own circumscribed view of it" (12.4). "There is no real wall of difference between all the various sects of the new theology" (12.6). The "new theology" she mentions refers to the various forms of New Thought emerging in the 1890's, but the statement stands as a generic admonition to be generous in our treatment of all religious expressions that "affirm self-transcendence in the context of spiritual freedom and in the absence of submission to mortal/material authorities" (PRUF, number 28). "Lose sight of all differences," she continues, "all side issues and lesser things, and seek but for one thing—that is, the consciousness of the presence of an indwelling God in you and your life" (12.7). Then, in one of the more well-known passages from *Lessons in Truth*, she writes: "just as there is less separation between the spokes of a wheel the nearer they get to the hub, so you will find the nearer you both come to the perfect Center, which is the Father, the less difference will there be between you and your brother [and sister]" (12.7). The universalistic dimension of Unity's doctrine is beautifully conveyed in passages at 12.12 and 12.14: "Beloved, as surely as you and I live, it is all one and the same Truth. There may be a distinction, but it is without difference" (12.12). "The teachings of Spirit are intrinsically the same, because Spirit is one" (12.14).

While affirming the importance of tolerance and acceptance of the good in all traditions that affirm self-transcendence in the context of spiritual freedom and in the absence of submission to mortal/material authorities, she continues to stress the necessity of focusing on one's own spiritual growth. "The moment that any person really comes to recognize that which is absolute Truth—namely, that one Spirit, even the Father, being made manifest in the Son, ever lives at the center of all human beings—[that person] will know that he [or she] can cease forever from any undue anxiety about bringing others into the same external fold that he is in" (12.21). "Keep your own light lifted up by living the victorious life of Spirit" (12.22).

God is again defined as both Parent and Principle in paragraphs 26-38. "There is no necessity for us to separate God as substance, God as tender Father; and no reason why we should not, and every reason why we should, have both in one; they are one—God principle outside us as

unchangeable law, God within us as tender, loving Father-Mother, who has compassion for our every sorrow" (12.28). She continues: "Every metaphysician [Christian Idealist/Unity student] either has reached or must in the future reach, this place; the place where God as cold principle alone will not suffice any more than in the past God as personality alone could wholly satisfy" (12.34) In an important and most progressive statement, Cady affirms the motherhood of Deity. She writes: "Just here we must have, and we do have, the motherhood of God, which is not cold Principle any more than your love for your child is cold. I would not make God as Principle less, but God as individual more" (12.35). "The whole business of your Lord (the Father in you) is to care for you, to love you with an everlasting love, to note your slightest cry, and to rescue you" (12.36).

Students are reminded that Unity is a practical, living, ever-expressing, ever-growing religious movement. This profound truth is powerfully yet sweetly expressed in this Lesson. Students may desire to explore the practical expression and application of these life changing truths through a careful and serious study of *Living the Life* (the third text and class in the *Welcome to Unity Series*). Just as Cady observed that "there is no real wall of difference between all the various sects of the new theology" (12.6), so we today likewise observe that there is no real wall of difference between the various works that express the ideals of Unity today. To the degree that we follow the teachings of the Fillmores and H. Emilie Cady, we allow full participation by all Unity students in the highest adventures of spiritual unfoldment while offering educational opportunities of the highest caliber to all Unity followers. To that same degree we are all following the brilliant path blazed by our co-founders and H. Emilie Cady.

Lesson 12 "*Bondage or Liberty, Which?*" (Lesson One in current editions)

This Lesson was intended by Dr. Cady to be the final Lesson in *Lessons in Truth*. It was apparently her understanding that only after a study of the previous eleven lessons could one actually decide on the matter which is posed in the title of this Lesson. The italicized "preface" to this Lesson functions equally well when read before beginning Lesson 2 (the original Lesson 1) in current editions.

Here is where Dr. Cady believes a stand must be taken. We have been informed of the result of error thinking and have been exposed to the wonder and reward of the God-centered life. The choice comes into each life. "Somewhere on this journey the human consciousness, or intellect,

comes to a place where it gladly bows to its spiritual self and confesses that this spiritual self, its Christ, is highest and is Lord" (1.7). "You and I, dear reader, have already come to ourselves ...and now we cannot turn back if we would" (1.8). The expression, "come to ourselves," is one that was once a common expression for the discovery of Truth and Unity; many "old timers" in Unity will recognize it. This is a good world; and our celebration of Cady's expression of this Truth was part of the work and mission of U-P.C. and is the ongoing work and mission of Unity in general.

She affirms: "It is time for us to awake to right thoughts, to know that we are not servants, but children, and if children, heirs (Romans 8:17)...to all wisdom ...to all love ...to all strength, all life, all power, all good" (1.11). "This claiming of our rightful inheritance, the inheritance that God wants us to have in our daily life, is just what we are learning how to do in these simple talks" (1.13). "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. In these simple lessons we shall take only the first steps ...toward the land of liberty..." (1.21). The powerful idea of actually living the Truth ("living a life") is the basis for the third text in our *Welcome to Unity* Series. This fine text and personal study-guide (*Living the Life*) gives instruction in the practical application of Unity's foundational teachings. All committed Unity students will desire to study this text as they seek to discover their own conscious awareness of Truth.

Cady explains that the way we come to the conscious knowledge of the Truth is through daily prayer and meditation. "Every person must take time daily for quiet meditation. In daily meditation lies the secret of power" (1.23). "Doing is secondary to being ...If you have no time for this quiet meditation, make time, take time" (1.24). "So we go apart into the stillness of divine presence that we may come forth into the world of everyday life with new inspiration and increased courage and power for activity and for overcoming" (1.29). "The ultimate aim of every [person] should be to come into consciousness of an indwelling God, and then, in all external matters, to affirm deliverance through and by this divine One ...a calm, restful, unwavering trust in All-Wisdom and All-Power within one as able to accomplish the thing desired" (1.40).

Coda

As our study of Unity's primary textbook, together with the Bible, concludes, we take up Cady's charge to her readers and students. It is now the responsibility of each of us, as Unity students, to make the decision for ourselves: "*Bondage or Liberty, Which?*" Remember, no one can make your decision for you. Decision requires individual commitment, and a willingness to do the required inner work that is necessary to "living a life" of Truth. H Emilie Cady, together with Charles and Myrtle Fillmore and others of like mind, have sketched the terrain, and given guidance to the appropriate routes to follow. The choice for each of us can only be made by us. In Unity and in our hearts we choose freedom and Truth; and, as Cady says: "Remember this: Desire in the heart for anything is God's sure promise sent beforehand to indicate that it is yours already in the limitless realm of supply, and whatever you want you can have for the taking" (6.30).

In our ongoing reflection on Cady's magnificent work, we look ahead to our next chapter, a review of the texts and teachings of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, co-founders of the Unity movement. To prepare for this exploration, and to close our study of *Lessons in Truth*, we turn to the frontispiece of our Lessons and find the inspired words of Charles Fillmore:

Unity is a link in the great educational movement inaugurated by Jesus Christ; our objective is to discern the truth in Christianity and prove it. The truth that we teach is not new, neither do we claim special revelations or discoveries of new religious principles. Our purpose is to help and teach mankind [humanity] to use and prove the eternal Truth taught by the Master (LT, frontispiece).

Unity's Foundational Teachings

Chapter Four

The Fillmore Texts and Teachings

*The purpose of this chapter is to provide the student with a general introduction to the texts that comprise the Unity canon. "Canon" here refers to the collection of texts that contain the authentic teachings of a religion—in our case, Unity. In this chapter we will focus specifically on the works of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore or texts that are direct results of their writings; but remember H. Emilie Cady's **Lessons in Truth** (surveyed in detail in chapters three and four of this text) together with the Bible (which will be considered in chapter five) are the two primary texts of the movement. The works we will review in this chapter span many years and contain the Fillmores' reflections and commentaries on all pertinent topics in Unity's doctrine. They contain the literary and doctrinal results of the Fillmores' study and application of Truth teachings. Together with **Lessons in Truth** and the Bible, these inspired classics of Christian Idealism stand as the single best source for Unity's authentic doctrine and sustained exposition of Unity's Five Primary Teachings:*

1. There is only one presence and one power everywhere: God, the Good Omnipotent.
2. Humanity is Divine.
3. The principle of Idealism: Mind is primary and causative.
4. The freedom of individuals in matters of belief.
5. The universal teachings of Christianity are true in their spiritual application.

At the completion of this study, the student will know the order in which each of the texts was published, understand the overall content of each text, and have some insight into the teachings presented in the most important texts. Key topics to be discussed in this chapter include:

1. The Division of the Canon
2. The Primary Text
3. The Secondary Texts
4. The Tertiary Texts
5. The Canon as a Bibliography

The Division of the Canon

Classification and ranking of religious texts may be somewhat hazardous. Opinions, evaluations, loves, and interests vary from person to person, institution to institution and, of course, over time. In this regard, divisions and classifications within divisions offered here are tentative. They have emerged on the basis of theological research and interpretation by Certified Instructors affiliated with U-PC and students and professors at Unity-Progressive Theological Seminary. Classification (and in some cases re-classification) of texts within categories has occurred on the basis of deliberations resulting from numerous classroom offerings of the Certified Instructor course, "*Unity's Foundational Teachings*," and the Seminary course, "Foundations."

At present, the division and classification offered here represent the only systematically organized guide to the foundational texts of the Unity movement. Again, we note, these classifications remain tentative.

The texts in the canon are classified into three categories - Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary. The three categories represent the order of doctrinal significance of the texts and suggest the sequence in which the texts should be studied by those interested in exploring and appropriating Unity's authentic teachings. Remember, all texts cited here are Foundational. The classifications are general and relate to the texts as individual documents; students are advised to avoid arbitrary evaluations of specific passages on the basis of the categorical classifications of the texts in which they are found. In other words, some passages in the Primary texts regarding specific subjects (ie: God, Truth, Jesus, Love, etc.,) are not as good as those found in Secondary or Tertiary texts.

Texts in the Primary category are of the greatest importance. For the most part they offer the clearest and most accurate expression of the Unity doctrine. They are designated as Primary because they are the first and best sources for statements and expositions revealing Unity's teachings about the most fundamental issues in religious life and expression. All Primary texts were published in the Classical period of Unity's history (1903-1948), and, thus necessarily, reveal the direct approval of either or both of the Fillmores.

Secondary texts also date from the Classical period, and so, like the Primary texts, they reveal the direct influence and approval of Charles or both of the founders. They also give good and helpful insight into our religious teachings. Unlike the Primary texts, however, they tend to be less comprehensive and systematic than the Primary texts; they also tend to be more digressive in their presentation of the material. They are not to be summarily dismissed due to their secondary status. They contain many exceptional passages, some of which are entirely unique in the canon.

Tertiary texts are generally from the Modern Era (1948-1966). Except for the *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary* (1931) and *Myrtle Fillmore's Healing Letters* (1936), texts in this category are posthumous works and, thus, reveal the work of an editor or editors. Again, as with the Secondary texts, the works found in this section should not be deemed insignificant. They, too, are Foundational texts. Unlike texts in the other sections, however, these works (aside from *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary*) were neither authorized nor approved by the authors. For this reason, their value as Foundational texts must remain something less than the texts published during the lifetimes of the founders of the movement.

The Primary Texts

The Primary texts are those that provide the best insights into Unity's authentic doctrine and the Five Primary Teachings. These are the texts on which later texts are based. They offer the teachings upon which others will build and expand. The sustained treatment of ideas and themes found within these texts provides an authoritative basis for all future studies. As we consider these texts individually, remember that first among the Primary texts are *Lessons in Truth* and the Bible.

Christian Healing – This was Charles Fillmore's first book. It was first published in 1909 and then revised in 1926. Although it was his first book, we know that articles written by Charles Fillmore had been appearing in Unity periodicals since the first issue of *Modern Thought* in 1889. Charles Fillmore had been writing about Truth ideas for twenty years before *Christian Healing* was published.

The book is presented in twelve lessons (chapters) with statements or affirmations concluding each lesson. These statements are designed to be used for spiritual discipline—a very important theme for Mr. Fillmore. A study guide with questions from each lesson has been added to the text to facilitate reflection and understanding.

Christian Healing is the most systematically organized of all the Fillmore works. It is an excellent primer for persons interested in spiritual healing and Idealism. Of all the numerous books published by Unity over the years, this first great work by Charles Fillmore remains the most thorough and satisfying explication of Unity's foundational basis in Christian Idealism. It is an evangelical text and a revolutionary document. The first six chapters are especially significant in this regard. When persons ask what Christian Idealism is, they can be referred to the first six chapters of *Christian Healing* for the answer. The text as a whole serves as a good introduction to

the rest of Charles Fillmore's works; for example, *The Twelve Powers of Man* is prefigured in chapters seven through twelve. *Christian Healing* is the source for numerous statements that have become Unity classics. Here we find these definitive statements:

On love: "Love in Divine Mind is the idea of universal unity" (CH, p. 130).

On prayer: "...prayer is cumulative. It accumulates spiritual substance, life, intelligence; it accumulates everything necessary to [our] expression" (CH, p. 78).

On Divine ideas: "Divine ideas are [humanity's] inheritance; they are pregnant with all possibility, because ideas are the foundation and cause of all that [humanity] desires" (CH, p. 13).

On Idealism: "The foundation of our religion is Spirit, and there must be a science of Truth. The science of Truth is God thinking out creation. God is the original Mind in which all real ideas exist. The one original mind creates by thought" (CH, p. 18). "Every idea projects form" (CH, p. 34).

On "the law of mind action" – "An understanding of the Logos reveals to us the law under which all things are brought forth-the law of mind action" (CH, p. 18). See also, p. 24. "Every word brings forth after its kind" (CH, p. 65).

On the trinity: "The Trinity is known commonly as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; metaphysically it is known as mind, idea, and expression. . . .The mind of God is Spirit, soul, body; that is mind, idea, expression" (CH, pp. 20 and 21).

On regeneration: "When [humanity] realizes that there is but one body-idea and that the conditions in [the] body express the character of [one's] thought, [one] has the key to bodily perfection and immortality in the flesh" (CH, p. 34). "This is the 'regeneration' of the New Testament, [is] a process of body refinement to the point of physical immortality" (CH, pp. 38-39).

On the purpose of life: "The object of [humanity's] existence is to demonstrate the Truth of Being" (CH, p. 55).

On Life: "Life in Divine Mind is unlimited as an idea back of perpetual, omnipresent action..." (CH, p. 44).

On Substance: "Substance in Divine Mind is an idea of perfection in form..." (CH, p. 44).

On Intelligence: "Intelligence in Divine Mind is all-knowing. . ." (CH, p. 44).

On the role of humanity in the Divine economy: "[Humanity], being the highest emanation of Divine Mind, has great directive power and is really co-operator with God in forming the universe" (CH, p. 68).

These selections represent only a small sample of the magnificent collection of classical statements of Unity's traditional teachings on these subjects. Students are encouraged to make a thorough and systematic study of *Christian Healing* and so discover the many other exemplary expressions of our teachings and their meaning.

Prosperity Of all the Unity texts on prosperity, Charles Fillmore's classic work, titled *Prosperity*, is the most satisfactory. Published in 1936, the book is an excellent introduction to Unity's teachings on the relationship between human consciousness and material sufficiency. It is also a fine introduction to Unity's Christian Idealism.

Published during the "Great Depression" in the United States, *Prosperity* affirms that we are not subject to materialist economic processes; rather, as spiritual beings, we have dominion over matter—through mind, we are supplied. As Fillmore writes: "Spiritual discernment reveals that we are now in the dawn of a new era, that the old methods of supply and support are fast passing away, and that new methods are waiting to be brought forth" (P, p. 9). Further: "It is not money that controls [persons] but the ideas they have about money. Ideas of poverty are just as powerful to enslave [persons] as are ideas of wealth. Every [person] should be taught how to handle ideas, rather than money, so that they serve [us] rather than have dominion over [us]" (P, p. 80). *Prosperity* instructs the reader on the right way to handle ideas related to material supply.

Following the model developed in previous texts, the book is divided into twelve lessons (chapters), with affirmations or prayers concluding several of the lessons. These statements are designed to enhance readers' understanding of divine supply and inspire the readers in their practical appropriation of the teachings. While all the lessons are helpful, persons new to Unity may find the lessons on substance (lesson 1 and 3), tithing (lesson 9), and giving (lesson 10) especially insightful.

Regarding substance, Fillmore writes:

God is substance, not matter, because matter is formed while God is the formless. God substance lies back of matter and form. It is the basis of all form yet does not enter into any form as a finality. Substance cannot be seen, touched, tasted, or smelled, yet it is more substantial than matter, for it is the only substantiality in the universe. Its nature is to "sub-stand" or "stand under" or behind matter as its support and only reality (P, p. 14).

The role of humanity in the manifestation of Good is reiterated throughout the text. For example:

[Humanity] is greater than all the other creations of God-Mind because [it] has the ability to perceive and to lay hold of the ideas inherent in God-Mind and through faith bring them into manifestation (P, p. 64).

And again:

There is a universal law of increase. It is not confined to bank accounts but operates on every plane of manifestation. The conscious co-operation of [humanity] is necessary to the fullest results in the working of this law (P, p. 81).

Persons often ask about Unity's commitment to the love offering plan and where they might find insight into our teachings about love offerings. *Prosperity* has a very nice explication of our understanding of this new economic foundation. This selection is often cited and occasionally appears in publications of the U-P.C. under the heading of "The Great Colony"–

Everywhere true metaphysicians are preparing themselves to be members of the great colony that Jesus is to set up, by working to eliminate from their minds all selfish ideas,

along with all other discordant vibrations that produce inharmony among members of the same group. A step in this direction is the gradual introduction of the "freewill offering" plan to replace the world's commercial standard of reward for services (P, pp. 149-150).

The U-P.C. was ever committed to this ideal and, following Charles Fillmore, we recognize: "In order to make a success of this great effort we must have the loving co-operation of everyone to whom we minister" (P, p. 150).

As noted earlier, "Lesson Nine" gives an excellent introduction to tithing. Persons who have questions about how and why Unity students practice the spiritual process of tithing should read "Lesson Nine." As Fillmore notes: "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).

It is strongly recommended that all serious Unity students read and study *Prosperity*. Not only does it present our teachings on prosperity in a clear and understandable form, it also brings those teachings to life with vitality and warmth. For persons ready to celebrate and enjoy the "dawn of a new era" (P, p. 9) that Fillmore writes about, there is not a finer text than this masterpiece.

Texts of Biblical interpretation

Unity's primary texts of Biblical interpretation and Unity's allegorical method of Biblical interpretation will be covered in detail in our next chapter. Among the Foundational texts of the movement, two present detailed allegorical interpretations of Biblical texts. These are Charles Fillmore's *Mysteries of Genesis* (published in 1936) and *Mysteries of John* (published in 1946). In these two books readers are presented with the most sustained allegorical interpretation of specific books of scriptures offered since the Biblical studies of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772). Both books present the entire text of the two Biblical texts and considerable commentary on many of the selected passages. The allegorical method of interpretation (in which persons, places, objects, and events are seen as symbolic of states of consciousness) is Unity's unique contribution to Biblical studies in the twentieth century.

By following the allegorical method of interpretation, Unity's approach to scripture represents a renaissance in the area of Biblical studies. Annie Rix Miltz was Unity's great pioneer in this renaissance, and Charles Fillmore consolidated and then further advanced the work of Miltz.

All religious interpretations of scripture occur in a theological context. The theological context in which Unity interprets the Bible is two-fold: Idealistic and Individualistic. Our allegorical (symbolic) method brings both systematic structure and personal encounter to our study of the Bible. In shorthand form, we summarize our approach as "Allegorically interpreted and personally applied."

Thus, in Fillmore's two books of Biblical interpretation, we are given not only an excellent example of allegorical interpretation generally, we are also given good insight into our Idealistic theology and its personal application in and through Bible study. For example, in *Mysteries of Genesis* we are given a primary introduction to what Unity believes, using the Biblical text as both a traditional reference point and a spring board to our own theology; for example:

In the 1st chapter of Genesis it is the great creative Mind that is at work. The record portrays just how divine ideas were brought into expression. As [a person] must have an idea before he [or she] can bring an idea into manifestation, so it is with the creations of God. . . . The 1st chapter shows two parts of the Trinity: mind, and idea in mind. In the 2nd chapter we have the third part, manifestation. In this illustration all theological mystery about the Trinity is cleared away, for we see that it is simply mind, idea in mind, and manifestation of idea (MG, p. 12).

A commentary on Genesis 26:12-22 reveals a more precise application of this same theological premise (Idealism and individual application), and again the allegorical method. This selection relates to the relationship between spiritual and material thoughts in individual consciousness:

The second well was called Sitnah, a name that also signifies "strife" and "hatred." The material sense thoughts (Philistines) do not give up easily but follow the individual a long way on his [or her] path to development of a spiritual consciousness. However we read that Isaac's third well, called Rehoboth (a name signifying "broad places" or "enlargements"), was not taken by the Philistines. Material thoughts cannot continue to follow and annoy the [person] who is persistent in his [or her] determination to find the "water of life" (MG, p. 215).

Mysteries of John presents a detailed allegorical study of the Fourth Gospel and a good exposition of Unity's primary teachings on a variety of topics. It also offers important insights into Unity's teachings about Jesus and the Christ. Although Unity's complete Christology (doctrine

about Christ) has not been explicitly developed and will require study of passages found throughout the canon, *Mysteries of John* offers the most comprehensive collection of Christological statements. A few selections are offered here.

As Fillmore notes: "Jesus recognized this truth that the Christ, the divine-idea [person] or Word of God, was His true self and that He was consequently the son of God. Because Jesus held to this perfect image of the divine [person], the Christ or Word entered consciously into every atom of His being. . . . Thus 'the Word became flesh'" (MJ, p. 15). We are taught: "The divine idea - the Christ or Word of God - is always everywhere present" (MJ, p. 11).

Our relationship to Jesus Christ is summarized through an analogy with light: "The light of Jesus Christ is, symbolically, the light of everyone who enters the same state of mind that He did... [T]o enter the Christ Mind you have but to think along Jesus Christ lines" (MJ, p. 30). Further: "The Christ within is always declaring, 'I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.' The first lesson in spiritual development to be learned is that everyone has within him [or her] the light of divine understanding" (MJ, p. 86).

The work of the Christ as Idealistic mentor and guide to humanity's right relationship with God is presented in Fillmore's interpretation of John 5:30-31. Fillmore comments: "The Christ is the perfect God idea, which is ever in touch with its source. The Christ therefore realizes always that it can of itself do nothing, and places all judgment in the law. The laws of God are unchangeable. [Humanity] neither makes nor creates anything of permanence; [it] discerns what God has created and conforms to it in thought and act" (MJ, p. 64).

Fillmore explains how Jesus is our great guide in the regeneration process. He writes: ". . . the promise is that all who incorporate in mind and body the living creative Word, as He did, will with Him escape death. . . . Jesus overcame death of the body. His followers are expected to do the same" (MJ, p. 93). A bit later he writes: "Jesus represents [humanity] in the regeneration; that is [humanity] in the process of restoring [the] body to its natural condition, where it will live right on perpetually without old age, disease, or death" (MJ, p. 109).

In the text, Jesus is revealed as Master Teacher and Way-Shower. For example, Fillmore writes: "An understanding of Truth comes only to those who abide faithfully in the teachings of Jesus" (MJ, p. 88). Also especially insightful in this regard is Fillmore's study of the passage that reads: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Of this Fillmore writes:

This text reveals the heart of the glad tiding of Jesus Christ to [humanity]. In love God gave His only-begotten Son, the fullness of the perfect-[person] idea in Divine Mind, the Christ, to be the true spiritual self of every individual. By following Jesus' example of recognizing and acknowledging the Christ in our every thought, word, and deed, thus unifying ourselves with His completeness, the outer will become as the inner; we shall be like Christ; we shall know Him as He is. He who truly believes "cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life" (MJ, p. 39).

Mysteries of John contains many other teachings about Jesus and the Christ. Students are directed to the text itself to discover these teachings and their importance in their own lives. They also are encouraged to read the Gospel of John.

The Secondary Texts

The secondary texts are those that provide the reader with a good insight and understanding of Unity teachings. They are more thematic or issue specific and less comprehensive than the primary texts. Most of them appear to be anthologies. These texts represent the remainder of Mr. Fillmore's works published during his lifetime. The dates of publication of these texts span the years 1926 to 1941. This span is within the Classical period in the history of Unity.

Talks on Truth (1926, revised and enlarged in 1934) – This text deals with a variety of issues and themes. Its Foreword describes the current form of the book as one designed to meet the "demand on the part of Unity students for books dealing with Truth fundamentals" (TT, *Foreword*). It is further described as "a more adequate textbook for those who are seeking an understanding of esoteric Christianity" (TT, *Foreword*). It is an interesting book in that it deals with many topics that are not presented in as much detail in other Unity texts from the Classical period - for example: microorganisms (Lesson 2), the church (Lesson 9), eschatology and apocalypticism (Lesson 11), and the Holy Spirit (Lesson 12). Lesson 13, "*Attaining Eternal Life*," offers an excellent study of regeneration, and Lesson 14, "*Jesus Christ's Atonement*," presents Unity's teaching on this primary Christian topic.

The Twelve Powers of Man (1930) – This book explains how the awakening and regeneration of our subconscious mind occurs through the Superconsciousness (or Christ Mind). It specifies our spiritual faculties as faith, imagination, power, zeal, will, love, judgment, understanding,

strength, order, elimination, and life; links each with a disciple of Jesus; and specifies "the nerve centers in the body at which they preside" (12 P, p. 16). For example, Peter represents the faculty of faith, presiding at the center of the brain; John represents love, presiding at the back of the heart; Simon the Cananaean represents zeal, presiding at the back of the medulla; and so on (see 12P, p. 16). Explanation and delineation of the faculties, their representative nerve center, and corresponding disciple is restricted to the book's first chapter. The remaining twelve chapters are essays on each of the faculties, but the anatomical thesis does not figure prominently in these chapters.

Jesus Christ Heals (1939) – The healing methods of Jesus are described in this book. Unity's Idealistic approach to healing is presented here in the context of the ministry and teachings of Jesus. The first six chapters of *Christian Healing* offer a more systematic presentation of Unity's approach to healing, but this text serves as both an inspirational reiteration of our healing methods and as a fine guide to the practical use of the methods. For purposes of individual practice, students may find the following chapters especially helpful: "*Realization Precedes Manifestation*" (JCH, chap. 3); "*Producing Results*" (JCH, chap. 4); "*Healing Through Praise and Thanksgiving*" (JCH, chap. 9); and "*Healing Power of Joy*" (JCH, chap. 11).

Teach Us To Pray (1941) – This text was co-authored by Charles and his second wife, Cora Dedrick Fillmore. It contains three dozen short articles, many containing affirmations and prayer treatments. The text also contains "*Sample Prayer Treatments*," which offers guides to possible prayer treatment for specific healing opportunities (TP, pp. 179-182); and "*Six-Day Prayer Treatments*," which presents specific denials and affirmations for each day (TP, pp. 182-188). Although research remains inconclusive at this point, some students of Unity's canon and doctrine suggest that Cora Fillmore's role in the compilation of the text was quite significant. This suggestion is offered on the basis of the presence of a great number of terms and concepts not found in other foundational texts.

The Tertiary Texts

With the exception of *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary*, the tertiary texts are posthumous compilations of the writings of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore. The materials that were chosen and assembled reveal the work of editors. Although the texts are all derived from the authentic writings

of the Fillmores, and in quite a few cases from writings that are found in earlier texts, it is important to note that the texts as a whole, their arrangement and presentation of topics, as well as the bulk of the writings themselves were not actually approved by the authors for publication in the form in which they now appear. It must be noted that this does not make the texts unimportant or "non-Foundational," but it does suggest a necessary lower ranking in the Foundational canon.

Although we do not know all the persons who may have participated in the editorial creation of these texts, we do know that Frances W. Foulks compiled *Myrtle Fillmore's Healing Letters*; Warren Meyer selected and arranged her *How to Let God Help You*; and Cora Fillmore had a role in compiling some of Charles Fillmore's posthumous works, including *The Revealing Word*, on which Blaine C. Mays also worked.

Metaphysical Bible Dictionary (1931) – This magnificent dictionary was compiled with the assistance of Theodosia DeWitt Schobert. Because of Schobert's role in the compilation of the dictionary, we rank it as a tertiary text. The ***Metaphysical Bible Dictionary*** (MBD) is the world's most exhaustive allegorical lexicon. It offers the allegorical meanings of persons, places, and events in the Bible. Only Swedenborg's ***Dictionary of Correspondences*** compares with the MBD, and the MBD far surpasses the Swedenborg lexicon in both detail and depth of explication. Unity students are reminded, however: "The fact is that Scripture names cannot be limited to any one interpretation. . . . A dozen persons may get inspiration in a dozen different ways from one Scripture text" (MBD, "Preface, p. 6 A. Note: "Preface" pages are not numbered, numbers are derived by numbering backward from the first cited page in the text [p. 10]; letters refer to columns [A is left, B is right]). Additionally, we are cautioned: "The interpretations given [in the MBD] are suggestions, by no means final. Each may be worked out more fully and comprehensively" (MBD, "Preface," p. 6.B - 7.A).

Atom-Smashing Power of Mind (1949) – This book was compiled from "articles . . . originally published in Unity magazine over a period of half a century, one of them going back as far as the year 1898" (ASP, "Foreword"). The book is an anthology of Charles Fillmore's writing on a variety of topics relevant to the Christian Idealist. This eclectic compilation is a rich smorgasbord of musings, reflections, and explicit teachings. There is no apparent system to the arrangement of the chapters, and readers may find the text most helpful as a reference text, using the index to search out passages on various topics.

Keep A True Lent (1953) – This book (KTL) serves as both a spiritual primer for the Lenten season as well as a daily devotional guide. The primer part of the text is the seventeen chapters

that precede "The Lenten Lessons." The lessons themselves read like *Daily Word* lessons. What may make these lessons more attractive than those of *Daily Word* is that these were written by Charles Fillmore. Most of Unity's teachings find at least brief treatment in the text.

The Revealing Word (1959) This book is a handy and quite usable "abridged dictionary" containing the Idealistic definitions of common words and specialized terms from Unity's theological vocabulary. It is a helpful text for all Unity students.

Dynamics for Living (1967) This text was compiled by Warren Meyer. It presents an assortment of short passages on various topics from the works of Charles Fillmore. Students may find some passages to be interesting and helpful, but earlier texts in the canon will reveal Fillmore's thoughts more fully.

The Charles Fillmore Concordance (1975) This is an expanded index to all of Charles Fillmore's texts. It was compiled by Clinton E. Bernard, with editorial revision by Jeffrey Fischer. Words and concepts used in the works of Charles Fillmore are referenced by text and page. Although helpful in most instances, students should note that some words are not properly cited and some notable concepts are omitted.

The Works of Myrtle Fillmore

There are two works currently published that are attributed to Myrtle Fillmore. Both are compilations published posthumously, so they are classified in the tertiary category. The only book that Myrtle Fillmore actually wrote was *Wee Wisdom's Way*, a text that, like the periodical from which its title is derived, is no longer published.

Myrtle's written ministry took three forms: magazine articles, lecture notes, and perhaps most significantly personal letters to persons seeking her insight on particular issues and/or her prayer support. Today, there is growing interest in "Mother Myrtle," Unity's co-founder, and many would welcome additional texts containing her writings. In the two texts we have, Myrtle Fillmore is revealed to be a thoughtful religious theorist, a consummate Idealist, a superior exponent of Unity's traditional teachings, and (something her husband is not often revealed to be in his writings) a genuinely caring person. What Myrtle Fillmore gives us in her two texts is something almost entirely missing in all of her husband's work: insight into what we call "The Unity Way." Although ever caring and supportive of the persons with whom she corresponds, she is likewise ever firm and explicit in her advocacy of Truth principles as the solution to the seeming challenges brought to her. This is The Unity Way; a way of living our Truth in the spirit of the "Mother of Unity." As we continue to study and learn *Unity's Foundational Teachings*, we are reminded that in addition

to intellectual knowledge of our words, terms, and methods, we are called to an inner understanding of the wisdom, tone, and manner in which Unity students express themselves. Myrtle Fillmore gives insight into this style of expression. We are wise to follow her in this Unity Way.

Myrtle Fillmore's Healing Letters was published in 1936. These excerpts from Myrtle's writing were compiled by Frances Foulks, the author of the powerful guide to prayer, *Effectual Prayer*. In her "Appreciation," Foulks tells us: "This book is made up of extracts from the letters of Myrtle Page Fillmore, 'mother of Unity,' as she was lovingly called and as she was in its founding. . . . As the letters from which these extracts were taken blessed and lifted those to whom they were sent, it is hoped that they will do this for others as they now go forth in printed form. . ." (MFHL, "Appreciation"). The text contains powerful Truth teachings. Of the role of Jesus Christ and Christianity in the Unity teachings, she writes: "The Unity teaching is based on the Jesus Christ teaching, and naturally we advise all people to hold firmly and steadfastly to the principles taught and demonstrated by this first Christian metaphysician. We have found in Christianity rightly interpreted more Truth than in any of the other religions we have dipped into; consequently we advocate it" (MFHL, p. 27). Further, and with a rhetorical energy not unlike her husband's, she conveys something of the full seriousness of the Unity mission: "Jesus cannot reach the minds that are immersed in materialism. By those immersed in materialism we mean not only those who deal with the most material elements in the world but also those who have materialized Christianity" (MFHL, pp. 27-28).

Regarding prayer, Fillmore tells us: "Prayers aren't sent out at all! . . . Where would we be sending our prayers? As individuals we should direct them to our own mind and heart and affairs" (MFHL, p. 33). It is "communion with God" (MFHL, p. 35).

The selection titled "*No Incurable Disease*" presents Unity's foundational response to the error of illness in any of its appearances. All who are serious about spiritual healing should read this selection. She writes: "There is no such thing as a 'disease' or incurable condition in the system . . . Anything that does not measure up to the Christ pattern of perfection can be changed. . . . No one who has awakened spiritually and is seeing his [or her] threefold being in the light of Truth would speak of disease as something of itself" (MFHL, p. 62).

The selection on "*Permanent Prosperity*" is equal if not superior to the best studies offered in Charles Fillmore's *Prosperity*. "A rich consciousness always demonstrates manifest prosperity" (MFHL, p. 68). "We are to cease depending on outer, material avenues for prosperity, because when we look to the outer we look away from the one resource that is within us" (MFHL, p. 69).

"*Our Methods*" (MFHL, pp. 132-139) and "*To Truth Teachers*" (MFHL, pp. 154-176) offer excellent summaries of Unity's traditional approach to spiritual vocation. "We confer titles on no one, we use no titles ourselves, and we take no account of those which other persons use. We are privileged to use the title 'Reverend' if we do desire" (MFHL, pp. 137-138). "Our best Unity workers and leaders use no frills" (MFHL, p. 138). "Those who know the true purpose of this work are not so much concerned with titles or positions. They are intent upon expressing the Spirit of Christ" (MFHL, p. 139). To all Unity leaders of any era, she admonishes: "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" (MFHL, p. 174).

How to Let God Help You was published in 1956. Warren Meyer selected and arranged the material. Students will find the selections Meyer offers in this text, on the whole, more satisfying than those in his *Dynamics for Living*, a text compiled from the writing of Charles Fillmore. Like *Dynamics*, the selections offered here are generally short excerpts. Material for the text comes from Fillmore's letters, periodicals, and writings found in "a sealed envelope" that contained "lectures that Mrs. Fillmore delivered in Chicago during the summer of 1890" (HLG, *Foreword*). We call special attention to chapter 1 ("*The Purpose of Living*"), chapter 3 ("*Life is a School*"), chapter 7 ("*Denial and Affirmation*"), chapter 14 ("*Spiritual Understanding*"), chapter 26 ("*Generation and Regeneration*"), and her lessons on holidays: chapters 33 ("*Thanksgiving*"), 34 ("*Christmas*") and 35 ("*New Year's Opportunities*"). Please do not limit your study of *How to Let God Help You* to these chapters; encounter the entire text, and use the index to explore topics of special interest. Interestingly, chapter 28 ("*Prosperity in the Home*") includes strikingly similar phrasing as found in lesson 7 of Charles Fillmore's *Prosperity*, published in 1936 (several years after Myrtle's notes were dated and a few years after Myrtle Fillmore's transition).

Although some persons maintain that only Charles Fillmore taught the Unity doctrine of Regeneration and that Myrtle Fillmore was not an exponent of our teachings regarding this "process of body refinement to the point of physical immortality" (CH, pp. 38-39), *How to Let God Help You* suggests otherwise. As she writes:

There are many now on the road to an understanding that will eradicate the belief in death so completely that their bodies will never pass through the state of physical corruption. . . . This process will in time become so common that all will look forward to it as the ultimate, and dying in the old way will be thought disgraceful" (HLG, p. 80).

Tertiary Bible Texts

Students who are interested in Unity's interpretation of the Bible are directed to three good studies by Elizabeth Sand Turner. These three books are: *Let There Be Light*, which offers a brief and broad survey of the Old Testament; *Your Hope of Glory*, which presents an allegorical study of a harmonized version of the Gospels; and *Be Ye Transformed*, which covers the rest of the books in the New Testament. All the books are easy to read, and together they offer a fine survey of the entire Bible as well as Unity's method of allegorical interpretation. The study of the Book of Revelation in *Be Ye Transformed* is especially good. Turner relies heavily on Charles Fillmore's work, especially the *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary*. Because of the strong influence of Charles Fillmore and the ample citations of his work, we include the Turner texts in the Foundational collection.

The Canon as a Bibliography

We have now come to the close of our study of Unity's Foundational Texts. As students read these texts they should be aware that these texts present the clearest and best explication of Unity's teachings on the central spiritual and religious topics of the Christian faith. Above all they offer sustained exposition of Unity's Five Primary Teachings:

1. The Goodness of God and the unreality of evil.
2. The Divinity of Humanity.
3. The Idealist Basis of the Universe (Mind is primary and omnipotently causative).
4. The Belief in All Universal Doctrines of Christianity, spiritually interpreted and individually applied.
5. The Freedom of Individuals in Matters of Religious Belief and Practice.

The texts we have presented in this chapter, together with *Lessons in Truth* and the Bible, form the Unity canon. This library of our central texts is presented here as a bibliography, cited by author and given in chronological order:

The Bible

New American or New Revised Standard

Books by Myrtle Fillmore (1845-1931):

Myrtle Fillmore's Healing Letters (1936) [MFHL]

How to Let God Help You (1956) [HLG]

Books by H. Emilie Cady (1848-1941):

Lessons in Truth (1894 - first "lessons" appear in *Unity Magazine*) [LT]

God A Present Help (1912) [GPH]

How I Used Truth (formerly *Miscellaneous Writings*) (1916) [HUT]

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 (1st ed.) (1931) -with Theodosia DeWitt Schobert [MBD]

Prosperity (1936) [P]

Mysteries of Genesis (1936) [MG]

Jesus Christ Heals (1939) [JC]

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) [RW]

Dynamics for Living (1967) - compiled by Warren Meyer [DL]

Books by Elizabeth Sand Turner:

Let There Be Light (1954) [LBL]

Your Hope of Glory (1959) [YHG]

Be Ye Transformed (1969) [BYT]

Unity's Foundational Teachings

Chapter Five

Unity and the Bible

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce Truth students to Unity's understanding of the Bible and our method of Biblical interpretation. Students will also be introduced to those Unity books that deal primarily with the Bible and its texts.

Unity students are heartily encouraged to read and study the Bible and use it as a spiritual textbook to guide and inspire their lives. A good modern translation is recommended; specifically *The New American Bible* (a Bible produced by the Catholic Church and used by most Catholics) or the *New Revised Standard Version* (a Bible produced by Protestants and used by many in that family of faiths). The Unity movement and New Thought have not yet produced an authorized version of the Bible, although Unity has produced interpretations of two books of the Bible (Genesis and John). The Unity movement has also produced the most important lexicon for the allegorical (symbolic, spiritual) study of the Bible: *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary* (MBD). The MBD is recommended to Unity students who desire to study the Bible - please read the "Preface" to the MBD and the rest of this chapter before beginning your personal study.

Key topics to be discussed in this chapter include:

1. The Bible: Background and Structure
2. The Bible As Our Textbook
3. The Allegorical Tradition
4. How Unity Students Interpret the Bible
5. Unity's Primary Texts for Bible Interpretation
6. Selected Interpretations
7. Personal Application

The Bible: Background and Structure

The Bible contains sixty-six books (thirty-nine in the Old Testament, and twenty-seven in the New Testament). The book that Christians call the Old Testament contains the most sacred religious texts of Judaism. This collection is called the Tanak , an acronym formed of the words designating the major divisions of the text: Torah (Law); Nebi'im (Prophets); and Kethubim (Writings). Major divisions of the New Testament are the Gospels (biographies of Jesus); Acts (a single book dealing with the early history of the Church); Epistles (letters written by early leaders [most often by Paul] to churches and colleagues); and an apocalypse (The Book of Revelation), which presents a symbolic vision of a radical transformation.

The Bible is interpreted in various ways by different religious traditions. Judaic communities interpret the Bible differently than Christian communities, chiefly, but not exclusively, due to Christians' acceptance of the decisive religious importance of the New Testament text and the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. There is also tremendous diversity within the numerous Christian denominations, chiefly, but not exclusively, due to presuppositions about the nature of the text itself (literal or symbolic, for example) and also theological distinctions between Christian groups.

The Old Testament

The Old Testament (or, First Testament) is by far the longest of the two testaments. In its three major divisions, it tells the story of the emergence of Judaism while also presenting a mythic and spiritual account of the spiritual development of humanity and (when allegorically interpreted) the spiritual growth of individuals. The Law (Torah or Pentateuch [five books]) are the first five books of the Old Testament. Christians find special interest in the first two books, Genesis and Exodus, and the only book-length allegorical study of an Old Testament book is on Genesis - *Mysteries of Genesis*, by Charles Fillmore. The Prophets are the books that bear the names of the prophets of ancient Israel and Judah. Many Christians find prophecies about Jesus Christ in Jewish prophetic literature dealing with a Messiah. The book of Isaiah is particularly noteworthy in this regard. The Writings are those books that contain poetry and hymns (such as Song of Songs and Psalms), philosophic reflections (such as Job, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, and Proverbs), and certain historical narratives (Chronicles, Esther, and Daniel). Job and Daniel are quite symbolic and mystical, and Unity students may find allegorical interpretation of these books fascinating and rewarding.

The earliest parts of the Old Testament text grew out of oral narratives of the ancient Hebrews and Israelites. The earliest parts of the Old Testament were written down beginning around 1000 B.C.E., with significant narrative elements (found in the Torah, specifically Genesis) reaching written form around 950 B.C.E. (see James King West, *Introduction to the Old Testament* [Macmillan, 1981], pp. 67-68). The latest parts of the Old Testament are the works of the prophets and some of the writings. The very latest text in the universally accepted version of the Old Testament is probably the book of Daniel, written sometime in the second century B.C.E., perhaps between 167 and 164 B.C.E. (see West, Introduction, p. 480).

Protestants and Catholics divide the Old Testament into four sections: Pentateuch, Historical Books, Poetical and Wisdom Books, and Prophets. In respect of the Jewish faith that holds the Tanak sacred, we recognize the Judaic divisions of the Old Testament as normative; and in respect to our Christian tradition, we accept the names of the books and their contents as given in Christian versions. The content of the Biblical text as a whole is the same in both Judaism and Christianity.

Although Unity recognizes the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament that are universally accepted by Christians as normative, we also note a number of special books and additions to other books of the Old Testament as necessary parts of the Bible. These special books and additions, which were found in the Christian's first Bible (the Septuagint), are retained in Unity as a Deuterocanon (second collection of books). These books (such as First and Second Maccabees, and Wisdom of Solomon) appear in their proper textual location in Catholic Bibles, and as an additional section in certain Protestant Bibles. In Protestant Bibles where they appear they are grouped together as Apocrypha ("hidden writings").

The New Testament

The twenty-seven books of the New Testament form the foundation of Christian faith and social practice. The cornerstone of that foundation is the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, recorded in the first four books of the New Testament. These four books (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) are called Gospels - a word that means "good news." The "good news" of the Gospels is the message of Jesus to humanity. The chronology of the Gospels is as follows: Mark (ca. 65), Matthew (ca. 80), Luke (ca. 85), and John (ca. 100). Matthew is placed first because it was the preferred Gospel in the early Church.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are quite similar, and for this reason they are called the Synoptic Gospels (synoptic is derived from the Greek word for "same"). Matthew's Gospel contains the "Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew, chaps. 5 - 7), which offers the ethical foundation of Christianity. John is significantly different from the Synoptic Gospels. It is typically cited as the most symbolic of the Gospels. Although Unity students are encouraged to read and study all the Gospels, John remains the preferred Gospel for many Unity students due to its richer use of symbolism and its easily accessible allegorical content. It is the only Gospel for which a complete allegorical study has been composed - *Mysteries of John*, by Charles Fillmore.

The story of the emergence of Christianity and the work of its earliest leaders is told in a book written by the author of Luke's gospel. This book is called The Acts of the Apostles. Much of the book of Acts is devoted to the story of the missionary journeys of Christianity's greatest apostle, a convert from Judaism named Paul. Paul kept in contact with the numerous churches he had established or was planning to visit. The primary method of his communication was through letters. These letters (or epistles) make up the largest number of separately titled "books" of the New Testament. Some of the letters were not written by Paul, but they all tell of the development of the early church and the emergence of its primary teachings. The longest letter is Paul's letter to the Romans. The shortest, and also the shortest book in the entire Bible is 2 John. The letters of Paul are the earliest New Testament texts, written between 50 and 60; and the non-Pauline letters are the latest, with some perhaps being written as late as the middle of the second century.

The Book of Revelation is the last book in the Christian Bible; it is also the one book about which there is the most wide-ranging theological interpretation. It was written near the close of the first century, "toward the end of the reign of [the Roman emperor] Domitian, about 96" (William Calloley Tremmel, *The Twenty-Seven Books that Changed the World* [Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981], p. 221). The author tells us that his name is John. Although he may have been John, the disciple of Jesus, there is no evidence that the author and the disciple are the same person. The book of Revelation is an apocalypse (from the Greek, meaning "unveiled"); and, like other literature of this type (The Book of Daniel, for example), it was written to give inspiration and support to readers of the era in which it was written - specifically Christians facing persecution by the Roman state. As Elizabeth Sand Turner notes: "A literal interpretation leads to the utmost confusion. John, the Revelator, deliberately disguises his meaning by using symbols, and neither in the first nor the twentieth century could this book be understood without a conscientious effort to discover the spiritual significance of his remarkable visions" (BYT, p. 198).

Unity accepts the twenty-seven books of the New Testament as the authoritative collection. These twenty-seven books were listed together for the first time in a letter written around Easter 367 by Athanasius, the bishop of Alexandria. This collection (canon) was later accepted by a Synod at Rome in 382 and another at Carthage in 397. In addition to the official canon, there are a number of other texts that were read by early Christians. These non-canonical books include, *The Shepherd of Hermas*, *The Didache*, *The Revelation of Peter*, and a great number of Gnostic writings (most notably *The Gospel of Thomas*, *The Gospel of Mary*, and *The Acts of John*). Although we may find interesting insights and spiritual nourishment in the non-canonical texts, as Christians we focus our study on the canonical texts.

The Bible As Our Textbook

Unity students recognize the Bible as their primary textbook. Sometimes Cady's *Lessons in Truth* is also cited as our primary textbook, together with the Bible. As Charles Fillmore writes: The Bible "has been preserved and prized beyond all other books because it teaches [humanity] how to develop the highest principle of [its] being, the spirit" (MG, p. 10). He explains: "A textbook on the redemption or reconstruction of [humanity] should cover every phase of human character. . . . Our Scriptures, plus the guidance of 'the Spirit of truth' recommended by Jesus, form such a textbook for Christians" (ASP, p. 103). He also observes: "The Bible is a textbook of absolute Truth; but its teachings are veiled in symbol and understood only by the illumined" (ASP, p. 162). As our textbook, the Bible functions as a guide and instruction manual for our life and spiritual growth. It is vital for the Unity student to recognize this very practical function of this illumined textbook.

We recognize that the Bible is a divine book of life that has relevance to the Truth student of today just as when its stories were first told and first written. As Mr. Fillmore notes: "It is a divine 'book of life' rather than merely a history of people" (RW, p. 23). Although the spiritual dimension is central, the Truth student should also be familiar with the historical and ethical elements of the Bible (see LBL, p. 7). In Unity we affirm that the Bible bears witness to the word of God and we do recognize that God's word is omnipresent and continues to speak in and through us and all creation. In fact, the omnipresence of God is an important theme of the Bible.

Although the Bible is recognized as our primary textbook, it is not our only textbook. Unity students may find insight and guidance in numerous other writings, and the scriptures of other

religious traditions can bring inspiration. Unity students are encouraged to read the Bible as their primary religious text (together with *Lessons in Truth*), but they are also encouraged to let the Spirit of truth guide them in their personal spiritual growth and the selection of the texts that they choose to read. Remember, as Charles Fillmore reminds us: "This [the study of Bible symbols] does not mean that a study of the written Scriptures will itself solve your problems unless you come into the apprehension of the real Scriptures, the Bible of the ages, the Book of Life within your own consciousness"(P, p. 180).

Like other spiritually inspired texts, and perhaps more than others, a rewarding study of the Bible and its personal meaning often is achieved when a systematic method of interpretation is used to guide and enrich one's personal study. Unity offers such a method; one based on Christianity's original and longest practiced method of Biblical interpretation.

The Allegorical Tradition

Unity understands the Bible to be an allegory about the spiritual life and growth of humanity and individual persons, and so we interpret the Bible allegorically. The allegorical method of interpretation is Christianity's oldest and longest continuously practiced way of interpreting Scripture. Allegories are narratives in which persons, places, objects, and events serve as symbols of ultimate truths about the universe as a whole or the experience of individuals. In short, an allegory is a symbolic story that communicates the higher truths of life. It is absolutely imperative that the Unity student recognizes that our understanding of the Bible as an allegory and our use of the allegorical method of interpretation does not in any way compromise the integrity of the historical and ethical elements of the text. In Unity we affirm the historical reality and the ethical prescriptions of the Bible, while also realizing that historical and ethical dimensions are ultimately and most fully understood by individuals when seen symbolically—specifically, as a symbolic account of our spiritual development. We will return to Unity's method of interpretation later in this chapter.

In our use of the allegorical method, we follow in the footsteps of giants. The use of allegory to explain and interpret religious stories predates the philosophy of Plato (428-348 B.C.E.). The ancient Greeks used allegory to understand the higher spiritual truths communicated in their myths. Plato himself utilized allegory in many of his dialogues. By the time of Christian theological emergence, the allegorical method was already well established in Greek culture and Jewish communities in the Graeco-Roman world. The Jewish scholar, Philo Judaeus (of Alexandria) (30

B.C.E. - 50 C.E.), was the first theologian to apply the allegorical method of interpretation to the Torah, and his use of allegorical interpretation inspired the early Christians in their approach to the interpretation of the Bible.

The early Christians eagerly adopted allegorical method because it allowed them to communicate the inner meaning of their Scriptures to persons in the Graeco-Roman world. Christianity's first great theologian, Origen of Alexandria (185-254), not only established an allegorical method for Christians, he also produced numerous allegorical studies. It is to Origen that we look to find the source for Unity's threefold approach to Bible interpretation. In *On First Principles* (ca. 220), Origen divides Scripture into three parts, and writes: "Just as [a person], therefore, is said to consist of body, soul, and spirit, so does the holy scripture" (Origen *On First Principles*, trans. Butterworth [Peter Smith, 1973], p. 276). For him the body was the literal and historical meaning, the soul a meaning discovered through thoughtful reflection, and the spirit was "God's wisdom hidden in a mystery" (see *First Principles*, pp. 275-276). How similar this is to Charles Fillmore's observation: "As [a person] is a threefold being, spirit, soul, and body, so the Bible is a trinity in unity. It is body as a book of history; soul as a teacher of morals; and spirit as a teacher of the mysteries of being" (MG, p. 10). Turner cites the agreement between Origen and Fillmore in her important allegorical study of the Old Testament, *Let There Be Light* (LBL, p. 7).

Following its sympathetic endorsement by Augustine (see Wailes, *Medieval Allegories* [Univ. of Calif. Press, 1987], pp. 10-11), allegorical method dominated Christian Bible interpretation through the Middle Ages. In the wake of the great Ecumenical Councils of the early Church (325-451), Medieval allegorical interpretations were mediated by Church doctrine. Although less original than Origen, Medieval scholars systematized allegorical interpretation. Among well known theologians of the Medieval period, several are noteworthy for their allegorical studies; these include: Gregory the Great, The Venerable Bede, Bernard of Clairvaux, Peter Lombard, Albert Magnus, and Thomas Aquinas. The most significant allegorical interpreters of the period were not, however, the great theologians of the time; these would include scholars who are largely lost to history today: Paschasius Radbertus, Haimo of Auxerre, Christian of Stablo, Bruno of Segni, Geoffrey of Babion, Nicholas of Lyra, and Ludolph of Saxony. These are but a few of the many scholars who contributed to the incredible number of allegorical studies produced during the Middle Ages. In the Medieval period, to interpret the Bible was to interpret it allegorically. As Gregory the Great (540-604) wrote: "Allegory makes a kind of machine for the soul, far off from God, by which it may be raised to Him."

With the Reformation (sixteenth century) and the Protestant focus on the literal and historical dimensions of the Bible, allegorical interpretation entered a period of decline. Luther (1483-1546) and Calvin (1509-1564) both depreciated allegorical method and set the stage for the current popularity and scholarly domination of literary and historical methods of interpretation. For Luther, Calvin, and many Christians of today, the aim of Bible study was the discovery of the "plain meaning" of the text. For them, the Bible is not an allegory, not a symbolic textbook disclosing the nature and process of individual spiritual growth; but rather a scripture whose meaning is solely literal, in certain cases "inerrant" in historical and literary terms, and for some the sole document in which to discover the word of God.

The rebirth of allegorical interpretation can be traced to the work of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) - "the Swedish Seer." Like Origen and the Medieval theologians, Swedenborg affirmed that the literal meaning of Scripture reflected higher spiritual truths. Unity students will find some similarities in style and design between Swedenborg's *Dictionary of Correspondences* and Unity's *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary*. They will also note significant differences in interpretation of names and terms found in the two dictionaries.

The decisive foundation for contemporary allegorical interpretation as it is practiced in Unity and New Thought is the work of Mary Baker Eddy and her 1883 addition to *Science and Health*. This addition (which added *With Key to the Scriptures* to the title) offered an allegorical interpretation of parts of Genesis and The Book of Revelation. It also contained a "glossary" that was essentially an abridged dictionary containing her allegorical interpretations of selected words and terms. It was Eddy's work that laid the foundation for Unity's and New Thought's development of allegorical interpretation.

Emma Curtis Hopkins (1849-1925), the founder of New Thought, followed her teacher, Mrs. Eddy, in the use of allegorical interpretation. She writes: "material terms are used to convey great spiritual truths, and physical transactions, descriptions and namings should have metaphysical [allegorical] interpretations" (Hopkins, *Class Lessons 1888* [Ministry of Truth, 1990], p. 23). As shown in *Unity and History*, Hopkins had a tremendous influence on the theology of the Fillmores. It was Hopkins, and especially one of her gifted students, Annie Rix Militz, who inspired the Fillmores in their development of Unity's method of Biblical interpretation. Unity's first *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary* had been compiled in 1914 by R.C. (Rufus Collins) Douglass. Yet, allegorical Bible interpretations by Annie Rix Militz (founder of the Homes of Truth Movement, who had been a fellow Hopkins student with the Fillmores) were regularly featured

in Unity's publications for over a decade before Charles Fillmore took up the work (when Mrs. Militz's work required her focus). (See *The Twelve Women of the Chalice*, L. Hammock.)

How Unity Students Interpret the Bible

The first and foremost rule for the Unity student to observe in studying the Bible is that it is to be allegorically interpreted and personally applied. That is, the Biblical text is recognized as a symbolic narrative in which the meaning of the symbols are understood by each of us in our own individual ways.

The great Augustine recognized that "multiple senses were to be expected in the study of Scripture" (Wailes, p. 53); and Augustine notes: "since things are similar to other things in a great many ways, we must not think it to be prescribed that what a thing signifies by similitude in one place must always be signified by that thing" (Wailes, p. 55). These words are echoed in the "Preface" of our own *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary*, where we read:

[The] fact is that Scripture names cannot be limited to any one interpretation; no one can truthfully say that a certain text means such or such a thing and nothing else. A dozen persons may get inspiration in a dozen different ways from one Scripture text. . . . We do not wish to convey the impression, however, that the reader will find herein presented the beginning and the end of all Bible symbology and of the phases of Truth that may be developed from it. The interpretations given are suggestions, by no means final. Each may be worked out more fully and comprehensively. (MBD, pp. 6 and 7)

Also like Augustine, and Origen before him, the Unity student of the Bible recognizes that all interpretations must accord with the Truth of Being. In earlier times, Christians relied on what was called the Rule of Faith. Today, in Unity, we might think of our Rule of Faith as the Truth of Being. We find an outer expression of the Truth of Being in our five primary affirmations:

1. There is only one presence and one power everywhere: God, the Good Omnipotent.
2. Humanity is Divine.
3. The principle of Idealism: Mind is primary and causative.
4. The freedom of individuals in matters of belief.
5. The universal teachings of Christianity are true in their spiritual application.

More specific and detailed expressions of these five primary affirmations can be found in *A Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith*. Of course, the Truth of Being is ultimately known best to you through your own experience of the Spirit of truth in your midst. It is the Truth of Being that is your primary guide to discovering the meaning of the Bible's allegories for yourself. As you read and study scripture ask yourself how the stories reveal this Truth; how they disclose the omnipotence of God, the divinity of humanity, the principle of Idealism, the spiritual freedom of individuals, and the great ideals of Christianity. This is a starting point for all your studies. Look for these elements in each and every narrative - *seek and ye shall find!*

Along these same lines, Elizabeth Sand Turner instructs:

Whenever we open the Bible we should affirm, "Let there be light," and close it with the grateful acknowledgement, "and there was light." By this affirmation and acknowledgement we attune our minds to the Spirit of truth. Then wisdom scatters the darkness of limited human reason and supplants it with understanding. No longer do we read the Book and find it difficult to understand. With His light shining on its pages the Bible become a vibrant, living Word that guides us step by step along the path of spiritual unfoldment. (LBL, pp. 5-6)

Perhaps the clearest expression of the personal appropriation of Bible meaning is given by the renowned Truth teacher, Emmet Fox. In *The Ten Commandments*, Fox writes: "the Bible always means Me - I who read it. I have often said that in principle I wish that every Bible had printed on the cover, '*This means ME,*' because everything in the Bible is a study of human psychology and metaphysics" (*The Ten Commandments*, p. 53). Continuing the theme of personal application further, Turner observes: "We should project ourselves into the sacred narrative, for only in that way can we see in it our own personal experiences. The Bible is the story of our spiritual growth. It records how we were created, how we lost our divine heritage, and how we may regain it" (LBL, p. 8). Mr. Fillmore relates this concept of personal application to Idealistic theology when he writes: "The characters in the Bible represent ideas in one's own mind. When this symbolism is understood one can follow the characters in their various movements and thus find the way to solve all one's life's problems" (RW, p. 24).

Unity affirms that the Bible is about us—each and every one of us. It is an inspired book of life, which reveals the meaning of the universe and our role in it as spiritual beings. Like all symbolic narratives, the symbolism of the Bible may be appropriated by individuals at their own level of meaning and their own level of understanding. As you read and study the Bible, remember our five primary teachings and our foremost rule: "allegorically interpreted and personally applied." Remembering these teachings and this basic rule will serve as an illumined guide to your personal study of our primary text.

Unity's Primary Texts for Bible Interpretation

As Unity students begin their personal study of the Bible, they are encouraged to seek out Unity churches and study centers with courses and groups that emphasize the study of Scripture. Places where teachings such as are reflected in this study guide routinely offer courses in allegorical Scripture study. Those who desire to pursue the study of the Bible on their own are directed to Unity's primary texts on the Bible. Each person will discover his/her own best method for studying the Bible, and the following books and reading order are presented as suggestions for consideration.

Unity's classic text for individual study of the Bible is the *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary*. The Dictionary contains the symbolic meanings of nearly all words and terms used in the Bible. "The interpretations given are suggestions, by no means final. Each may be worked out more fully and comprehensively" (MBD, *Preface*, pp. 6-7). Students working on their own or in conjunction with classroom studies of the Bible will find this text an invaluable aid to their inquiries and reflections.

Thus far the Unity movement has published only two books offering allegorical interpretations of entire books of the Bible. These are *Mysteries of Genesis* and *Mysteries of John*, both by Charles Fillmore. Each Fillmore book presents the entire text of the two books of the Bible, divided into sections, together with allegorical interpretations of each specific section. *Mysteries of Genesis* and *Mysteries of John* are well written and serve as good surveys of both these important books of the Bible and Unity's method of interpretation.

In addition to *Mysteries of Genesis* and *Mysteries of John*, Unity students will find three books by Elizabeth Sand Turner especially helpful to their studies. Together, Turner's three books offer a general overview of the entire Bible. Selected Biblical narratives receive detailed allegorical interpretation and major characters and themes are covered in sufficient depth, but the Turner works are not comprehensive. Turner's three texts are:

Let There Be Light (Old Testament)

Your Hope of Glory (the "biography" of Jesus Christ as told in the Gospels)

Be Ye Transformed (New Testament: Acts through The Book of Revelation)

The Turner books are easy to read and serve as good general introductions to the parts of the Bible on which they focus. They are filled with references to the works of Mr. Fillmore, and they are recommended to beginning students of allegorical interpretation.

Clearly there is more to do in the area of allegorical interpretation. Charles Fillmore's two books on Genesis and the Gospel of John are a good beginning, but allegorical studies of the other (64) books of the canon are in order. The Unity-Progressive Council is pledged to leading a renaissance in allegorical interpretation. Through the work of the dedicated faculty and students of the Unity-Progressive Theological Seminary this long awaited rebirth was encouraged. Interested persons are advised to be on the lookout for Dell deChant's ***The Bible Is Like a Person*** and interpretations of specific parts of Scripture in (now rare) remaining copies of issues of *Progressive Thought*. (***The Twelve Women of the Chalice*** by Leddy Hammock, along with the accompanying CD set, ***Twelve Women of the Chalice*** by Leddy Hammock and Sue Riley, are based on a feminist take on Charles Fillmore's insights on the twelve spiritual faculties. Writings of Dr. Herbert Hunt, longtime honored Unity ministerial program Bible instructor, are no longer printed by Unity Books, but, thankfully, can often be found online, currently on TruthUnity.net, an invaluable resource.)

Selected Interpretations

Persons who are unfamiliar with Unity's method of Biblical study are encouraged to review the texts cited in the last section. Even more, new Unity students are encouraged to study these books and the "primary textbook," which is their focus and vital inspiration. What will you find in these books? You will find insight and exhilaration, understanding and encouragement, keys to success and guides to spiritual growth. Not only will readers gain a greater grasp of the meaning of the Bible when they study these texts, they will also gain a greater understanding of life itself and their own spiritual adventure in divine unfoldment.

To further familiarize new students with Unity's method of Biblical interpretation, the following selections are offered as examples of how the method is applied to specific passages. Before reading

over these selections, students may desire to review the earlier section in this chapter, "*How Unity Students Interpret the Bible*," and refer to a Bible to read the passages cited.

In his interpretation of the fourth day of creation (Genesis 1:14-19), Mr. Fillmore comments:

The fourth step in creation is the development of the "two great lights," the will and the understanding, or the sun (the spiritual I AM) and the moon (the intellect). These are but reflectors of the true light; for God had said, "Let there be light: and there was light" - before the sun and moon were created.

The "firmament of heaven" is the consciousness of Truth that has been formulated and established. In the second day's creation a firmament was established in heaven (realm of divine ideas). (MG, pp. 19-20)

Fillmore offers an insightful interpretation of the encounter between Jesus and those who came to arrest Him, lead by Judas. As reported in John 18: 1-11, the encounter took place in a garden in the Kidron valley (or, "over the brook Kidron"). In *Mysteries of John*, Mr. Fillmore writes:

The name Kidron means "turbid stream." Kidron represents the current of confused thoughts that sometimes pour in upon us when we try to go into the silence. The "garden" locates the current in the world of universal thought. . . .

Jesus realizes that the time has come for Him to prove that the principles of almighty God are invulnerable and must stand. The I AM faced the condition unafraid (Jesus representing the I AM answered, "I am he").

Your faith in the righteousness of your cause (Peter [who cuts off the ear of the high priest's servant, Malchus]) may lead you to combat the ruling religious thoughts, and in your impetuosity you resent their counsel (Malchus, counselor) and deny their capacity to receive Truth (cut off the right ear); but good judgment and a broad comprehension of the divine overcoming through which you are passing will cause you to adopt pacific means. "Put up the sword into the sheath." (MJ, pp. 152-154)

In her allegorical explication of the conversion of the apostle Paul (named Saul prior to the conversion), Elizabeth Sand Turner sheds light on the spiritual meaning of conversion and the name(s) of the great evangelist. In *Be Ye Transformed*, she tells us:

Interpreted [allegorically], conversion represents a spiritual awakening which unites the human will with the will of God. The Christ, I AM, expresses through "I will." . . .

This was the great change that took place in Saul as a result of his vision. Until this time his nature had been that of Saul, who represents the will functioning in personal consciousness. He now takes on the characteristics of the name, Paul, which means "little, restrained, lessened," and signifies one who is devout, humble, and obedient to Christ. (BYT, p. 55)

As these selected examples reveal, Unity's method of interpretation can be applied to all parts of the Bible. Although the entire Bible has not yet been interpreted on the basis of our method, good studies have been offered of significant portions and general themes. The samples given here are offered as inspiration to new Unity students to begin their own encounter with our primary textbook and the Unity books that reveal its meaning.

Personal Application

Let there be light! This is about me! With these two claims, Unity students at any level of study rightly begin their inquiry into the meaning of the Bible. Where we take our inquiry is a matter of our own consciousness and individual desire. Some will find refreshment and enjoyment in reading and rereading certain beloved passages; others will find inspiration by opening the book at random and studying a verse or chapter; still others will study the entire Bible systematically, on their own or in courses offered in progressive Unity centers and churches, or in various schools of higher learning.

Regardless of your previous background and experience in studying the Bible, the Unity method of interpretation will bring new and exciting understandings. It will also bring personal upliftment and inspiration. How often we have heard new students of our method exclaim: "I wouldn't have been so afraid of reading the Bible if I only could have studied it in the Unity way earlier!"

No one should be afraid of the Bible. It was written for us as a textbook to guide us in our spiritual life. It is not a book of fear but, rather, a divine book of life. As Unity has taken the fear out of Christianity, so too has it taken the fear out of the Bible.

At all levels of inquiry, the Unity student remembers that the spiritual dimension of the study is found in the personal application of the Bible's meaning. The spiritual meaning is always

personal. Remember our working guide: "allegorically interpreted and personally applied." The entire text is about you and your consciousness. Every person, place, animal, object, and event is symbolic of some phase in your own consciousness. The general and "suggested" meanings of Biblical elements can be found in the *Metaphysical Bible Dictionary* and the works of Charles Fillmore and Elizabeth Sand Turner. These excellent texts point the way to the meaning of the text for you, but they are only the beginning of the personal application. At every turn of the Biblical narrative, remember the text is telling you about you, revealing phases and aspects of your consciousness, and affirming your inevitable and glorious growth toward full manifestation of the Christ. What is Adam in you, Eve in you, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob/Israel, and Joseph in you? Who are the Canaanites, the Babylonians, the Israelites, the Greeks, and the Romans in your consciousness? Where is your Paul, your James, your Thomas, and your John? When does the Christ in you change your water into wine, raise your Lazarus, speak to your Mary and your Martha, enter your Jerusalem in triumph?

As we have invited you to study the Bible (as well as the rest of Unity's primary texts), we now remind you that the personal spiritual meaning of the book for you cannot be found in the works of others, no matter how brilliant and inspired those works may be. The great work in which you will find the personal spiritual meaning of the Bible is the book of your life. This book is still being written. It is truly the greatest story ever told, for it is the story of your discovery of divinity, the Christ in you. The Bible tells you about this great work and it can guide you in your writing; but you must write the book, find the Christ, and live the life.

As your study of *Unity's Foundational Teachings* in this course concludes, we encourage you to continue your study of Unity with *Living the Life*, the third and final text in the *Welcome to Unity* series. We also encourage you to read and study the books discussed in this study guide. Many Unity churches and centers offer courses on *Lessons in Truth, Christian Healing, Prosperity*, and the allegorical interpretation of the Bible.

As Charles Fillmore affirmed, Unity is a link in the great educational movement inaugurated by Jesus Christ. As Unity students, we participate in this living link with the work of Jesus Christ—*and we are grateful.*

Unity's Foundational Teachings

Key Facts and Ideas to Remember for Review

Chapter One

A Progressive Reaffirmation of Unity Faith (P.R.U.F.)

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

1. What are Unity's Five Primary Teachings, according to this workbook?

1.) _____

2.) _____

3.) _____

4.) _____

5.) _____

2. A. We believe that God is _____.

B. The four "O's" that describe the nature of God are

1.) _____ 3.) _____

2.) _____ 4.) _____

3. What is the "foundational teaching" of Unity?

4. (Yes or No) Do we believe in an evil power?

5. The premise of Idealism is that Mind is _____ and therefore _____.

6. (Yes or No) Are our minds separate from God Mind?

7. What is the primary basis for spiritual advance? _____

8. (True or False) Prayer is begging or beseeching God for a result.

9. (Yes or No) Does the Christ abide in all persons?
10. Jesus Christ is our Elder Brother, or _____ . We follow Him in the
R _____ , and full spiritual life.
11. The Holy Spirit is the _____ Spirit of God in action.
12. The Holy Trinity is the Father, _____ and Holy Spirit, or Idealistically:
_____, _____ and _____
13. (Yes or No) Is there any place where God is not?
14. The three-fold nature of humanity is _____ , _____ ,
and _____ : this three-fold nature is indivisible.
15. Where is the kingdom of heaven? _____ .
16. When do we expect the Second Coming? _____ .
17. The Golden Rule is

18. Unity is a _____ Church; a “community of _____ beings,
called together to seek and express Christ principles.
19. Charles and Myrtle Fillmore were Christian _____ .
20. (Yes or No) Does Unity accept all universal Christian doctrines?
21. (Yes or No) Does Unity accept the Bible as its primary text?
22. (Yes or No) Do we in Unity believe that ours is the only right path to God?
23. The three purposes of our “community of Spiritual beings” are:
- 1) to reaffirm and advance Unity’s traditional _____ .
 - 2) to be _____ educated in Truth principles.
 - 3) to be _____ structured and _____ in principle
and practice.
24. Who is the Head of our Church? _____

Unity's Foundational Teachings
Key Facts and Ideas to Remember for Review
Chapter Two
Lessons in Truth Part I

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

1. The author of *Lessons in Truth* is _____.
2. The date of the first printing of *Lessons in Truth* was _____.
3. Give the four “omni” words that we use to describe God:
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
4. (Yes or No) Can God ever be for a moment separated from His creations?
5. God is changeless Principle, but is at the same time person parent or _____ - _____ to each individual.
6. The hunger of _____ is only the cry of the homesick child for its Father-Mother God.
7. (Yes or No) Can God control our thoughts?
8. How will you know that the “still, small voice” speaks Truth? You will know just as you know you are _____. (see LT 3:23)
9. We learn how to use Spiritual principles through:
 - a. chance
 - b. fate
 - c. miracles
 - d. practice
10. Cady tells us that all systems of spiritualizing the intellect include _____.
11. To deny oneself is not to punish, but rather “to _____ the claim of error consciousness, to declare these claims to be _____.” (see 4.10)

12. There is no _____.
13. There is no _____ of life, substance or intelligence
_____.
14. Pain, sickness, poverty, old age and death cannot _____ me, for they are not _____.
15. There is nothing in all the universe for me to _____, for greater is He that is in me than that which is in the world.
16. To affirm anything is to assert positively that it is _____, even in the face of contrary evidence.
17. A. _____ is life, love, intelligence, substance, omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence.
- B. I am a _____ or manifestation of God, and every moment His life, love, wisdom and power flow into and through me.
- C. I am one with _____, and am governed by His _____.
- D. I am _____, perfect, holy and harmonious. _____ can hurt me or make me sick or afraid, for Spirit is God, and God cannot be sick, hurt or afraid. I manifest my real _____ through this body _____.
- E. God works in me to _____ and to _____ whatsoever He wishes me to do, and He cannot _____.
18. Denials have an _____ or _____ tendency.
19. A. _____ faith is an instinctive trust in a power higher than ourselves.
B. (True or False) Faith depends on physical facts and empirical evidence.
20. Complete this passage: "Desire for anything is the thing itself in _____."
(see LT 6. 27)

Unity's Foundational Teachings
Key Facts and Ideas to Remember for Review
Chapter Three
Lessons in Truth Part II

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

1. Cady defines understanding as “a _____ birth, a _____ of God within the _____ of (a person).”
2. We believe that the full realization of _____ is the one and only objective of humanity (see P.R.U.F., #3).
3. In Unity we define God as the G _____.
4. (Yes or No) Can humanity ever be satisfied if individuals do not discover the Truth about their Father-Mother God?
5. In the original edition of Lessons in Truth, where did Lesson Nine appear? _____
6. For what are we homesick? _____
7. In what Lesson do we find an instruction manual for attaining “The Silence?” _____
8. (True or False) To enter into the Secret Place we must find just the right teacher and method of meditation.
9. (Yes or No) Is our goal to develop psychic powers and out of the body experiences?
10. The two conditions for receiving clear revelation in prayer are:
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
11. (Yes or No) Does God desire to give you your highest desires?
12. (True or False) Healing is the only manifestation or gift of the Holy Spirit.
13. The closer we come to the center (God), the less _____ we shall find between ourselves and others.
14. God is both Principle and indwelling tender, loving _____ - _____.

15. The whole business of your Lord is : _____

16. Cady tells us that God is:

a. a man b. person c. substance d. a fellow sufferer

17. (True or False) Dr. Cady and the Unity teachings suggest that it is not necessary to make choices in our life.

18. (Yes or No) Once we awaken to the Truth, can we turn back?

19. "We have come to a place now where our search for Truth must no longer be for

the _____; it must no longer be our seeking a _____

to follow; but it must be our _____.

20. What is the ultimate aim of every person? _____

Unity’s Foundational Teachings
Key Facts and Ideas to Remember for Review
Chapter Four
The Fillmore Texts and Teachings

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

1. What is a “canon” and to what do we refer when we speak of the “Unity canon”?

2. What are Unity’s Five Primary Teachings, according to this workbook?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

3. We divide the canon into three parts. What are the titles we give to these divisions?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

4. Give the titles of the Primary Texts:

5. In *Christian Healing* Charles Fillmore offers a good summary statement about religious Idealism. Give his summary statement:

6. A. Give Unity's traditional definition of love:

B. Give Unity's traditional definition of substance.

7. What does "The Great Colony" explain and in what text would we find the text of "The Great Colony"?

8. In what two texts would we find an allegorical survey of two complete books of the Bible?

1) _____

2) _____

9. Unity's Idealistic and Individualistic method of Biblical interpretation can be summarized as:

_____ interpreted and _____ applied.

10. Where would we find considerable data regarding Unity's Christology?

11. Give the titles of the Secondary Texts:

12. Which text would we study to learn about the allegorical meaning of Jesus' disciples and the spiritual faculties within us that they represent?

13. Who co-authored *Teach Us To Pray* with Charles Fillmore?

14. A. Which Tertiary Text was published before Charles Fillmore's transition?

B. What text would help us experience the Lenten season spiritually?

15. Give the names of the two books by Myrtle Fillmore that are still published:

16. In Myrtle's work we not only learn Unity's teachings, we also learn the Unity

17. (Yes or No) Do we find Unity's teachings on Regeneration in Myrtle Fillmore's writings?

18. Myrtle Fillmore tells us that "Jesus cannot reach the minds that are immersed in

19. A. (Yes or No) Do we send our prayers to others?

B. Where does Myrtle Fillmore tell us we should direct our prayers?

20. Give the names of Unity's three Tertiary Bible Texts, their author, and the subject of each text.

1)

2)

3)

Unity's Foundational Teachings
Key Facts and Ideas to Remember for Review
Chapter Five
Unity and the Bible

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

1. The Christian Bible contains _____ books.
2. Christians call the Jewish Tanak, the _____ Testament.
3. The oldest parts of the Tanak were written around _____.
4. Give the major divisions of the New Testament:

5. List the four Gospels in chronological order:
1) _____ 3) _____
2) _____ 4) _____
6. A. Which book of the New Testament contains a history of emergence of the Christian Church? _____
B. Which book offers an apocalypse? _____
7. When were the 27 books of the New Testament listed together? _____
8. The Bible is our primary text book; it is a _____ book of _____

9. Give a short definition of allegory:

10. (True or False) In Unity we deny the historical and ethical dimensions of the Bible.

11. (True or False) The allegorical method of interpretation is relatively recent, coming on the scene with the work of Swedenborg.

12. Who was the first great theologian and Biblical interpreter in Christianity?

13. What movement helped bring about the decline of allegorical interpretation? _____

14. (True or False) Mary Baker Eddy used the allegorical method in her *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*.

15. The Fillmores' fellow Hopkins student, _____ authored regular articles on allegorical Bible interpretation published by Unity for around a decade before Charles Fillmore took up the work.

16. The first and foremost rule for the Unity student to observe in studying the Bible is that to be _____ interpreted and _____ applied.

17. Give Unity's five primary affirmations:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

18. In addition to Mr. Fillmore, name another author of Unity books that offer allegorical interpretations of the Bible. _____

19. Give the names of 4 Unity books that offer allegorical interpretations of the Bible.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

20. Emmet Fox tells us that "the Bible always means _____."

21. From the selections in the text (Selected Interpretations”), give the meaning of the following:

the sun _____

the moon _____

heaven _____

Jesus _____

Conversion _____

Saul/Paul _____

22. The spiritual meaning of the Bible is always _____.

23. What is the greatest story ever told?

24. What is your favorite Bible passage (give book, chapter, and verse (s)?)

**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)

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