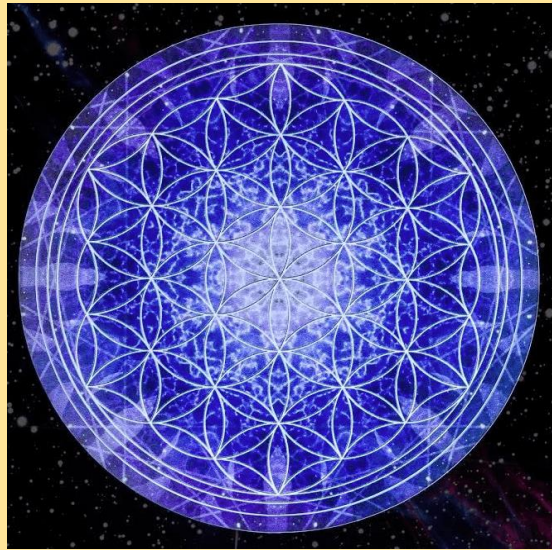


THE HOLY LIGHT ACADEMY

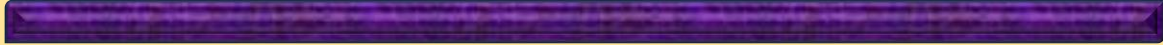


The Path of the Holy Light



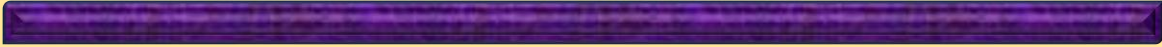
Section One

Foundations of Light



Introduction

The path of unfoldment through the initiatory process is seen as a step-by-step progression. Different mystical schools or traditions may view such steps somewhat differently, but innately the soul will unfold naturally regardless of what labels or frameworks are used. For this course of study we will use these steps: Awakening, Purification, Illumination, Transformation, and Unity. You will understand how these operate on the soul's path of unfoldment as you read these lessons. There are those who are still seeking which path to follow, and there are many such paths, whether they are the world religions, various traditions, other spiritual schools, or even a solitary path; however, eventually you will find which one will resonate with your soul. If these lessons do resonate with you, we hope that your spiritual unfoldment process will be an exciting journey!



Lesson One

First Foundation

Awakening

* * *

I. Your Initial Awakening

Awakening is the first foundation of Light. When you realize you have been asleep and dreaming, you have just begun to awaken. Here is where you want to keep alert, allowing the awakening process to continue, as opposed to letting yourself get distracted and unfocused. For this reason it is important for aspirants to practice certain spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, meditation, contemplation, and spiritual exercises. These are spiritual tools to assist you in further spiritual unfoldment. Refer to the installment of **Stepping Stones along the Path** regarding “The Spiritual Disciplines.”

What is Spiritual Awakening?

Let us first ask, what was being asleep? This state is when a person is unaware that there is more to understand about life and himself than he has believed or experienced before, and this includes the nature of the whole Creation and the Creator. Then something occurs that begins to awaken him. In many cases the beginner has already begun a journey, whether consciously or not, where he asks questions such as, "Where did I come from?" . . . "Why am I here?" . . . "Who or what am I?" . . . "What is the purpose of life?" and so on. People may ask countless questions, or the same questions in different ways, but your soul has set you on the journey in the first place and often springs it on you by surprise. The fact that an aspirant begins a journey that leads to genuine awakening is built into the soul, for this is a part of the unfoldment process, by which the journeyer has many inner experiences. In fact, each time you go through an Initiation, you are experiencing another awakening, reaching closer to the greater Awakening of realizing your Source as Divine Consciousness.

Although some people may have an awakening episode based on some kind of traumatic event in their lives: an illness, a serious accident, a death in the family, etc., this is not always the case. Often you will begin to awaken when you start questioning things around you, such as the dogma of a particular religion or church you may be a part of, or the way people see the world. You may begin to feel lost or as if the way you have been living is false or somehow wrong. You may begin to recognize the things you learned or had been indoctrinated into were not true at all, whether it's things you learned in school, church, books, the newspaper, etc. You also may begin

to recognize that many of your old habits, thought-patterns, and beliefs are wrong and must be changed or dismissed altogether. You may also begin to realize there is something more REAL beyond this limited physical world. Likewise, you may begin to feel that there is something deeper and more real beyond your own body, personality, mind, ego, etc. You begin to acknowledge that you are on some kind of path or journey in life, leading from an unreality to a higher reality of being. You may begin to feel compassion toward others in need. You may begin to feel that the ideas about God that you may have heard or read are not completely correct and that you are starting to realize a deeper reality of what God truly is.

You may have noticed many of these rising to your conscious awareness as these are signs that you are indeed awakening. Also, the truth is, you are not just starting on this path, but you have always been on it, considering you have been in this world many lifetimes.

Although there are many levels of progression in the whole unfoldment process, this begins when the aspirant first awakens to something more in his life, a glimmer of Light that draws him out of sleep and begins his mystical journey, which guides him into deeper spiritual attunement, whereby he will soon receive the indwelling Light. In your initial awakening process, as you experience the various signs that we mentioned above, noticing things in your life and the world just aren't right anymore, you will also begin noticing a spiritual dimension opening up to you. Therefore, when you begin experiencing the spiritual Initiations, greater awakenings will occur.

Oftentimes, deeper senses of the Spirit may open to you. Certain schools of thought will call these abilities clairvoyance, clairaudience, and clairsentience, although some people will experience these to a lesser degree, and others will experience them to a greater degree. However, exercising your intuition is an important first step, and applying certain exercises and meditation assists in this process.

When it dawns on you that you have been asleep to Life, and you are becoming discontent with life in this earthly world, and you come to recognize that there is more to life than you thought, you have begun to truly awaken. You are asking those important questions about life and yourself because you're not satisfied with the way the world is and this signifies the beginning of the journey. You are beginning to awaken to the realization of who you are and what your true Source is. You are starting to awaken to the REAL LIFE IN GOD. However, that requires leaving behind the negative ways of this mundane world, a gradual process, granted, but it is all part of the journey, for you have embarked upon a journey along the Mystical Path, which is the path of continual spiritual unfoldment.

When you have spiritually awakened, you reflect and realize you have been asleep, asleep to a deeper reality. You are seeing things and hearing things very differently now, for you are no longer asleep. This sleep mode was merely a shroud that temporarily concealed you from the Light. When this shroud grows thin, you begin to see anew. Once you see the Light, and it grows in you, this shroud or veil of materiality will be rent, and you will see your true Being.

Fear has been a typical problem in spiritual growth, for it is the ego hindering your way forward. It would rather remain asleep, to not be responsible for anything, to live in its separate illusion. This is a kind of sickness.

“All forms of sickness, even unto death, are physical expressions of the fear of awakening. They are attempts to reinforce sleeping out of fear of waking. This is a pathetic way of trying not to see by rendering the faculties seeing ineffectual.... Sleep is withdrawing; waking is joining.”¹

When you become aware of wakefulness, out of fear the ego reacts. It doesn't want to have any part of it. It is comfortable in its unawakened state and doesn't care about what is real. Essentially, this means it would rather reside in the belief of its separation from God.

When one is submerged in this shroud of sleep, he is living in the “mass mind.” This is the collective thinking of mankind which has separated itself from God's Divine Mind, for it thrives on limitation, separation, fear, negativity, and deception. Each cultural society or national group has its own mass mind, but the physical world as a whole has its greater mass mind, which is perpetuated by all people in general, or what we will call the “untamed ego” of mankind.

If you have truly awakened spiritually, you will not soon forget the new reality you have begun to live, for you have begun your journey on the spiritual path. You have overcome the fear of moving forward. You become desensitized to the negative ways of the mass mind of the world and you begin to repel against them. It leaves you feeling uncomfortable, it leaves a bad taste in your mouth, and your senses are alerted to these negativities and you want to steer clear of them now. With Awakening comes the realization that your old ways are no longer in your best interest. As you look upon all the ways you have been tempted and deceived by the mundane world, and how attached to it you were, then you will realize you had been walking through the valley of shadows. You may not have resided in many of its darker shades, but you might have been drawn into a dimly lit realm that is still enticing and alluring in all its subtle ways of making you think that what you have been doing is acceptable. These are not of the way of Righteousness at all. While you are in this unfolding state, you begin to realize that you should no longer participate in certain negative activities and ways of thinking, for they will not benefit you. In fact, you will be drawn toward activities and ways of thinking that are far more enlightening. They will simply *feel right*. These are the righteous and virtuous ways of right thinking and right action. Let us explain the word “righteousness” as right-use-ness, the right and correct way to think, do, see, and experience life.

Primarily, we are referring to Awakening in the context of the Initiatory process, that is, the process of spiritual growth along the Mystical Path, which begins with the journeyer's experience of an initial awakening, for this is the starting point of his spiritual journey into the Divine. The new seeker begins to seek something more in life, for he has many unanswered questions and he wishes to seek out the answers, and this quite often serves as a catalyst that initiates his journey. However, soon you will find that intellectualized answers will fall short, for these will pale in comparison to experiencing the indwelling Light of Divine Consciousness.

Aspirants will experience their awakening in different ways, for each individual experiences these things somewhat differently. Some individuals will realize that what they have

been doing in life so far has gotten them nowhere. Others will feel as if they have been sleeping for a long time, as if they have just awakened from a dream. Some will feel a strong impulse toward God in their life that will manifest as a strong yearning for God, stronger than it ever had been before. Some will just open their eyes, as if for the first time, to look all around them at all they see and perceive with their senses, observing everything they have seen, heard, and done, and everything they acknowledged before – and then everything somehow seems so much different now, like a mysterious shift occurred in their life, as if they woke up from a dream. Everything will seem brighter, crisper, clearer to all the senses, if not just some of them, and more vivid and intense in some cases. For others, it will be an awakening of the intuitive or spiritual faculties, in which the realms of the unseen and unheard become the seen and the heard, through awakened sight and hearing. There are those individuals who are becoming clairvoyant or clairaudient, whether they witness small glimpses or large ones. Some people will have a feeling of ALIVENESS and enthusiasm, a burst of unexplainable inner joy for apparently no reason except for its own sake. Some aspirants will see a glimmer of Light within, as in meditation for instance, which may be the foreshadowing of the Illumination that their soul is preparing for. As the aspirant follows through with his awakening experience, applying his spiritual disciplines while letting his yearning heart guide him, he will enter the next level of unfoldment, entering the Initiation of Illumination, also called receiving the Light of the Christos. To clarify, we are referring to Christ Consciousness, or what some may call God Consciousness, Divine Consciousness, or even Cosmic Consciousness.

You may experience one or more of these above-mentioned characteristics of awakening, or even at different times on your spiritual journey. Essentially the awakening involves a door opening in your human consciousness, which is the beginning of entrance into Cosmic Consciousness. But this is a step-by-step Initiatory process, in which the soul unfolds like the buds of a rose as the sun rises in the New Dawn.

The awakening signifies the beginning stages of inner transformation. You will want to maintain your soul development by practicing spiritual disciplines so that your unfoldment will progress more smoothly and steadily.

Once you have been awake for a while, old habits may attempt to distract you or try to draw you back down, but it is incorrect to say you can fall back asleep. Since you have experienced a deeper reality, this becomes a part of your new reality. As some seekers have done, you might wander off for a time, explore other avenues, dabble in a few old ways, but this is not falling asleep, because you are still being active at something, even if it is not a definite focus on the Mystical Path. However, the unenlightened worldly ways will try to draw you away from your focus; therefore, you must apply devotion and discipline as you walk along this straight and narrow path of spirituality.

You will realize the dense physical world, which has been influenced by the mass mind, is not one you want to become attached to or bound by. You have to learn to abandon the worldly ways you have lived with in the past. To do this, you must allow your unfoldment to nurture, very much like a plant must be nurtured. An important part of spiritual growth is your growing yearning

for the Divine. We can demonstrate this by the fact that a plant thrives to absorb the light of the sun, which is likened to your yearning for the inner Light of the Divine. You will discover that the yearning in your heart does not lead to carnal things, but to the reality and righteousness of God in your life. You are not fulfilled in materialism, but only in the Spirit.

The problem has been that all your true desires and longings have been misplaced. They have turned into desires, compulsions, or addictions to the mass mind of the world, so they have all become temptations. Your one true desire which is in the very heart of your heart is in finding God and entering Divine Union, the goal of the Mystical Path. Early mystics called this *Unio Mystica*, and much has been written on the subject. The Creator leads all seekers on the spiritual path, but you must first go through the valley of the shadow of death, the dark night of the soul, to journey through the darkness before you reach the Dawn. Then you shall awaken to experience the glorious Light of Christ.

When you open your eyes and begin moving toward the Light, you see more clearly the error of your ways and that you wish to change this, to be rid of the old ways and to take on the new way, to be rid of the “corruptible” and to take on the “incorruptible.” The Light will reveal to you that these old ways are only hindering you. Likewise, you now desire to relinquish the old false self and to take on the new real Self. That which you truly are is not what you have been in the past, for while you slept, you dreamed that you were a different self, one that lives the ways of the material world that you depended on, yet you are only in it temporarily, not truly of it. You are simply a traveler in this earthly existence, for your true Source of being is beyond this physical world. You tend to exist in a very miniscule portion of all that truly exists, because this limited form was all that you knew since this was how you were taught. Your real being was masked, hindered from living to its fullest in the whole scope of Reality. You had to find a better way, to be taught the Truth and the Life and the Way, especially by a genuine spiritual teacher who could show you this deeper Reality.

Realize that you are here on this Earth for a reason, for it is the school of life, the school of learning through experience, that you may come to awaken from this physical world and into the spiritual world. It is very much like a birth from one world into another, or one level of existence into another. Except that while you still live in this level, you will be learning to experience life in the unseen spiritual reality, for to you it will now be the seen reality. Actually, the idea of varying levels is inaccurate, although it may seem this way in your ongoing unfolding process, until you come to realize there is only one Great Divine Consciousness, and you are ascending through it, eventually becoming one with it.

In reality, spiritual growth should be – and IS – the most natural activity in your life. The problem is that people block their progress, so they don't see the natural flow that is supposed to occur. A river naturally flows freely and uninhibited, until people build dams that begin cutting off the water's flow. The more you block the progress of your inner river with these self-made dams, the slower will be your spiritual growth. This is why committing to your spiritual disciplines is necessary. Your inner unfoldment is not an unnatural phenomenon or some extraordinary process you have to struggle with, or high hurdles you have to jump over. It is the dams blocking the

river's flow that are unnatural. Once you realize just how natural the flow of your inner growth should be, and begin observing and discarding the dams along the way, your progress will become easier and steadfast.

Awakening is a function of the soul, because the soul holds the pattern of awakening, for it is your birthright, a gift from the Creator. Everyone comes into the earth plane with this reality; therefore, the seekers on this spiritual journey will definitely awaken and grow.

Without expecting it, some seekers will have a feeling of ALIVENESS and enthusiasm, a burst of unexplainable inner JOY for apparently no reason except for its own sake. Others may feel this more subtly. Everyone experiences their journey a little differently.

Many are indeed called, called to awaken and unfold into a deeper spiritual reality, but it is also true that few will actually choose this path. This is the Mystical Path of the straight and narrow way, for it requires strict spiritual disciplines to walk it. It requires your yearning heart for the Divine, for you must learn to let go of the ways of the material world and to surrender over to God completely. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33 KJV) The Path is narrow because your focus must be on God, for his kingdom is His Divine Consciousness.

In the beginning, you will experience your awakening, and depending on the path or religious expression you have chosen, this may unfold a little differently for each aspirant.

In certain schools of Christian Mysticism, you may enter the sacramental Initiation of Baptism, because this essentially confirms or validates your inner awakening. Usually you will experience this awakening, then you make a decision to live a spiritual life in Christ, which is acknowledged in the Baptismal rite. In the mystical Baptism process, a spiritual connection to the Christos is formed within, the connection between Earth and Heaven within, between your lower nature and the higher nature, so at this point you have begun your commitment to Christ Consciousness, which means this process opens the door to the Illumination. Therefore, you have made a connection that leads you into the path of Christ Consciousness. In this way you have truly begun your journey on the Mystical Path.

Since you have made the decision to commit your life to the Divine Consciousness, you have begun your journey through the spiritual Initiations. The coming to fruition of your awakening and further unfoldment is an ongoing process of spiritual growth and Illumination that continues throughout your life. But, within this process of spiritual evolution, you will see the pattern of growth, maturation, and fruition. When you receive the Illumination, this experience will deepen and you will grow in understanding of its reality, and you will have more experiences, until you become a source of Light to others. It is a pattern for growth in the Spiritual Reality that echoes in your physical surroundings.

Once you are awake – aware that there is a whole different reality of Life to experience spiritually – then you are AWAKE. You don't literally fall back asleep as many people may think. This is a misconception. You can choose to ignore what you have experienced or what you now know, or you can deny it, but you can't **un**experience or **un**know the reality of the spiritual life

that you have encountered. Likewise, a plant does not **ungrow**. Its natural process is growth, maturation, and fruition.

For a time, a seed lies dormant in the ground, then it sprouts forth, grows unseen, breaks through to the surface (consciousness), becomes a little plant, is nurtured with good soil, water, sunlight, and air, then gains strength and matures, and finally bears fruit; then the seeds of the fruit is planted into the soil again; and so begins the cycle of Life all over again. But as the growth process unfolds, it must be nurtured, because it must fulfill what it was called to accomplish, which is to produce fruit for people to eat and seeds for further planting.

Soul unfoldment is like unto a prosperous garden that grows good crops, offering good food to feed people and seeds to plant, so that you will have more crops, on and on. This operates smoothly with an awakened soul. If the soil is bad or rocky, or it doesn't get enough sunlight or water, the crops will not grow, or if they start, they will wither and die. This is the state of an unawakened soul.

There is an old story that says sometime after Gautama Buddha's enlightenment, someone asked him who and what he was. Was he some kind of otherworldly entity, a magician, or even a god? The Buddha simply replied, "No – I AM AWAKE!"

II. Awakening into God's Reality

The physical world is definitely not all there is. But as you awaken, you begin to realize this fact. The unawakened person does not really understand his true nature; he does not know who or what he truly is beyond his mass of flesh, or even his outer mind. This earthly world supports the illusion that people are their flesh bodies, rather than what their true nature is, which is Spirit, or Divine Beingness. All people are indeed created in God's image, but it is incorrect to think that refers to the flesh, because God is Spirit, so all human beings are essentially Spirit. Plain and simple. These fleshy bodies are basically vehicles for the Spirit. Many materialists will resist this idea, especially since they believe the material world is all there is. The fact is, Spirit is all there is, but the physical world has been created from that Spirit; therefore, it has been formed from the Spirit-substance of the Divine Creator. The energy of the Spirit becomes denser in vibration and manifests as matter.

The problem lies in mankind's perception of reality, which usually includes only the physical, and excludes the spiritual, so he has created an illusion for himself. Here's an illustration of how the illusion works. At night when you have a dream, it often seems real, for it can include fragments of your normal life events and real people from your daily life. Then upon waking, you know it was not real, that it was just a dream. It was not a physical occurrence in your physical world. It existed in the dream world. It existed on a level that you recognize as not necessarily relevant to the physical world of your daily life.

When you begin to comprehend that there is something more to experience than the surrounding material world, you are beginning to realize it is an illusory world, an existence of

impermanence, essentially due to an incorrect perception and erroneous belief system, or in this case a lack of belief in something greater in life – which is the reality of God. You are awakening to the world of Spirit; the world of your true nature; the world which is relevant to who and what you TRULY are. Put another way, what YOU truly ARE.

All human beings are put here in the physical world for a reason, so the point is not to ignore it or try to escape it, as certain philosophies will explain, but to learn to enjoy it, to acknowledge the beauty and wonder of God's Creation and enjoy the essence and presence of God in this world, in this universe, for this is His Creation. Then you will be in harmony with the world and with God. But the illusion lies in the belief of separating God from the world, which means the person who has that perception is not in harmony with his Divine Source. So the point is to acknowledge God in all things in this earthly plane, so that you may see past the worldly illusion, and see into the whole reality of God.

You are not *of* the world, however, you are *in* it. In other words, the world is not your source, but you are journeying through it, toward the Divine, for that is your true Source, that is your true home, for that is your true being and essence. Divine Consciousness is within you and all around you, and it is not an illusion: it is eternal and infinite.

The physical world is not your true nature, because your true nature is Spirit. Your goal is to return to Spirit, and that journey will take place as you learn to live a virtuous life, to live honestly, to yearn for the Divine, to have compassion for others, and to live of the Spirit, not of the world while you're in it, because in truth you live in the Spirit, as the Spirit lives in you. As you come into harmony and union with the Divine, you will learn to experience reality on a level that will last beyond your physical body, for you will live as your immortal soul instead. The physical body dies, but the soul lives beyond this, and as its consciousness rises higher as it continues on its journey, it will enter Divine Consciousness.

The old belief that people see this world as a prison as if they must try to escape it is erroneous. Some people feel trapped in their bodies, and that is erroneous as well. If you can learn to be in harmony with this world and your body, acknowledging that God is within all things, and IS all things, you will be in harmony with Reality. God made this world and put Himself in it and within you, within all people. There is a reason and purpose for mankind being in this world; and there is a reason you are placed in these physical bodies, a good and holy and noble reason. Your being here in this world is not an accident. Erroneously, many people think this world is all there is and that this physical form is all they are, which seems to be a meaningless and depressing way to believe.

As mentioned before, this earthly plane is a school of learning, a place where you learn to grow; mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, all levels actually.

On the other hand, some people believe that living in this physical world is synonymous with living in iniquity or being susceptible to sinfulness. Temptations do abound in this world, but it takes discipline to restrain yourself against them and to live a righteous life. Although it is true that you learn from your mistakes and your negative actions, whether they are big or small, you need to learn to not be bound by them, or to be caught up in guilt or shame from them, which only

weigh you down. If you focus on positive virtues to guide you, these will steer you in a positive direction. Let us suggest virtues such as patience, purity, humility, compassion, gratitude, etc.

Remember that your true nature is Divine. If people would stop thinking that they are sinful and worthless because they are in a sinful world, and start realizing that they are beautiful, blessed, and divine in nature, then they will be in harmony with God's Reality – and then they will start to WAKE UP!

This is a world of impermanence and illusion, because things do not last but perish. All people are travelers here, visiting here for a time. William Shakespeare said it aptly, “All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women are merely players; they have their exits and their entrances: and one man in his time plays many parts...” (from Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*)

If you detach yourself from this world and the role you play in this particular lifetime, realizing you are an actor playing a part, with a particular name, body, personality type, and set of experiences, then you can relax more easily and move more smoothly on your journey. Instead of being bound up in shame and guilt for whatever mistakes you have made, be contrite of heart and choose not to fall into that trap again, then smile and chuckle, and then move on to the next scene in this play of this world.

We’re not saying you should plunge headlong through your life, thoughtlessly and dangerously, taking great risks, causing mistake after mistake, which is the hardest way to learn. This is where you learn to listen to the inner voice that guides you so that you will make less and less mistakes.

The ongoing experiences of unfoldment are essentially the expansion of your conscious awareness, which will lead you into Divine Consciousness. Although you are presently living in this material world, you are not getting caught up in it any longer, or in the deceptive, limited ways of the mass mind. Rather, you are learning to understand the true value of Life in its eternal and infinite state of being while you are awakening into the Divine Reality. What you experience in the earth plane is a fraction of living your life. The fact is, LIFE is you experiencing the activity of the Spirit as it flows through you and all of Creation.

Once you get so sick and tired of living in the old mindset and negative habits of this material world, and when you begin asking those big questions about life that begin your spiritual journey, you begin to awaken, so that you can make a major change in your life. Once you decide to truly change and stick with it, to keep up the discipline of being aware of everything around you and within you, then you become aware of the subtle evidence of a deeper reality found hidden in all things, of the unseen which becomes the seen, the unheard which becomes the heard. When you begin to hear the inner voice of the Divine within your soul, and experience and see its reality, a much deeper experience of recognition will bring the awakening you have felt to a much higher level. You will soon realize that the Divine Being is your true Self. Your initial awakening is the beginning of the spiritual journey, which will lead you into the greater Awakening toward Divine Consciousness.

Of course, when you have a significant awakening experience that transforms you and causes your heart’s yearning for the Divine to blossom, this is a wonderful grace that will urge you

onward, and your continued spiritual growth will become much easier. Usually you will have numerous spiritual experiences on your journey along the Mystical Path. Your soul is experiencing a very mystical journey as you experience Life more deeply, and come to realize your Divine Self within. In the Esoteric Sacramental Tradition, there are several levels of unfoldment or spiritual Initiations. In this process you have experienced your awakening, which is often followed by the Baptism, then the Illumination, and then Self-Realization. These are levels of spiritual growth that involve how your consciousness expands into a deeper awareness of Divine Consciousness, and eventually into Divine Union, or what early mystic contemplatives called the Unitive Way, or *Unio Mystica*. This is the process of the Ancient Initiatory Path, or what we have chosen to call the Path of the Holy Light.

The New Testament does refer to the Initiations by using the word Baptism:

“John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” –Luke 3:16

Let us explain this. The Baptism with Water is the commonly accepted form of Baptism in most churches, although some churches and schools use the anointing of oil instead, signifying a deeper level, a preparation for the next level. Therefore, the Baptism by Fire is receiving the Light, hence, the Illumination. Then, the Baptism by the Holy Spirit comes next, as some esoteric schools call this Self-Realization. These are the first three Initiations of the Mystical Path as accepted by certain mystical schools and orders, especially those of the Esoteric Sacramental Tradition.

The main principle is that everyone experiences life differently. Therefore, all aspirants will experience spirituality differently. Your soul experiences of unfoldment will continue, as long as you walk this Mystical Path. As your spiritual journey continues, your consciousness expands greater while you have numerous unfolding experiences as you enter deeper into God's Reality, or Divine Consciousness.

You don't have much control in the overall Unfoldment process, but you can allow God to do the necessary work within you, since it is done through His grace. However, you can put yourself in the right place by committing to certain disciplines to allow further Unfoldment. What we are saying is, you can do something about your spiritual growth right now, instead of just waiting for it to come around the corner.

Let's use this analogy. If you want to get a suntan under the sun, you have to stop what you are doing, get in your car, and drive to the beach. Sometimes you may procrastinate and decide to do it another day, putting it off. There will be a time when you finally make the decision to actually do it. Once you drive to the beach and get prepared, finally you will lay yourself out in the sand, putting suntan lotion on so your skin won't burn, then all you do is relax and let the sun do the rest of the work. There is a certain amount of work that you must do, and then there's a certain amount of work God will do, by way of his grace upon you.

“Anything that we have, even if it be only a high estimation of ourselves, is an impediment to progress. The greatest of all burns in self-pride. A man can give away what he has, only years of discipline can release them from the vanity of his own importance.”²

This is where the virtue of humility comes into play, realizing how insignificant you are in the grand scheme of reality, and that the Creator of the Universe is the all-important factor in your life, and it is the God within that you yearn for.

“The sincere student, likewise, does not desire the gratification of his ego, but an internal well-being which is more than all the treasures of the earth. He does not desire to be greater than another man. He has come to the realization the greatness is relative and illusionary.”³

When you humbly yearn for God in your life, without thought of yourself, your spiritual unfoldment is assured. The irony seems to be that when you apply disciplines toward your attainment, this seems selfish, but when you truly experience this process, your desire for God takes over and you are no longer trying to uplift yourself, or aim for some great spiritual experience, or reach toward some lofty initiation. Only reaching toward and experiencing God’s presence matters to you now, more than anything in the physical world, including yourself. This may resemble a person drowning under water as he gasps for air, because when he reaches the surface it will be a powerful awakening.

The unfoldment process involves an important formula that involves three keys: yearning for God, service to mankind, and attainment of self. These three keys function together, for they express three directions: God, mankind, and self, and these coalesce into the singular operation of Spiritual Unfoldment. Normally, if you focus on one of these, it will lead you to the others. For example, when you are guided by your yearning and worship for God, automatically you will desire to serve and to help uplift others, for your love for God and compassion toward mankind starts blossoming, and then this will lead to the attainment of your inner Self. Also, if you are practicing certain disciplines that involve self-attainment, your yearning for God and your desire to help others will develop. Likewise, if you put yourself out into the greater community and diligently help others, caring for them and letting your compassion go out to them, a natural yearning for God will be inspired as well as your own self-attainment. However, consciously working with all three of these at once is important, for the work as a trinity of inner Unfoldment. Incidentally, there is a point where you will realize that the key to self-attainment, or attainment of your God-Self, and the key to yearning for God, become one and the same. Likewise, when you serve others, the Spirit of God is within them, so you are serving God as well. These are three keys that seem to have three different directions, but they all eventually point to the Divine Source. These are essential keys for committing your life to what mystics call the Greater Work.

III. The Lamp on the Mystical Path

You can only follow this Mystical Path successfully if you continue practicing your spiritual disciplines, which will assist you in further Unfoldment, because you need these spiritual tools to keep you from slipping back into the old habits and distractions, for the negative ways of this world can lead you into deception and separation from your Divine Source. You were once under the spell of the deceptions and illusions of the physical world, but once you have awakened, you cannot be fooled by them again, that is, if you are keeping alert and focused on the Mystical Path, and allowing your yearning for the Divine to guide you.

You yearn for the Kingdom of God where this Path leads, for Jesus did say, “Behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” (Luke 17:21) Indeed, it is within your heart where God resides. The reality of the Kingdom of God is that the Divine Consciousness of God is within your soul, for it is within every single soul, yet most people have not awakened to this fact. Once you enter this mystical kingdom of God’s Divine Consciousness, you will find God within.

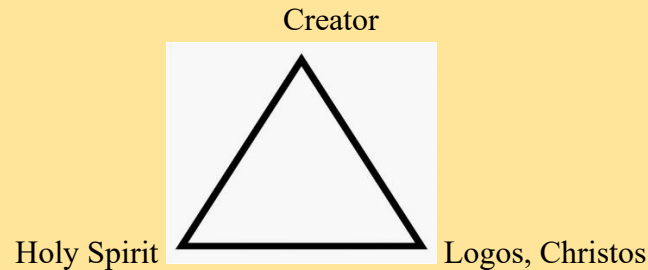
In the tradition of Christian Mysticism, you enter the heart of Jesus Christ as he enters your own heart, and leads you into Christ Consciousness. Your relationship with the Master Jesus in your heart is the mystical experience the Christian Mystic yearns for. And it is by the guiding Light of Christ within your heart that you see the Mystical Path laid out before you. “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my Path.” (Psalms 119:105.) The Word, the Voice, and Power of the Christos is this very Lamp unto your feet, for He is the Holy Light on this Mystical Path, which leads you to the Most Holy God.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was not anything made that was made.” –John 1:1-3

The Word is the Christos, the Logos, the second point of the Trinity. The Word made flesh manifested through Jesus for the upliftment of souls in the early days of the Piscean Age. He became the Way-Shower, for he leads all seekers to the Creator of All, whom many Christians referred to as their Holy Father, for as Jesus exemplified, “I and my Father are one,” –John 10:30, he leads them into this most sublime Way as well, for this is the Divine Union the true mystics seek. However, most genuine mystics see the Creator as androgynous, therefore, the wording may be rephrased to say, "The Creator and I are one." Also, certain mystical schools use the phrase “Mother-Father God,” especially in their prayers.

From the standpoint of the Trinity, using the symbol of the sacred triangle, the Creator resides at the uppermost point; then the Christos, the Sun/Son, the Logos, or the Word is at the right point; then the Holy Spirit is at the left point. The Creator speaks the Word, emanating His Voice across the vast spaciousness, and the activity of the Holy Spirit causes the manifestation of the entire Creation, which is still unfolding. This took place not only with this immediate solar

system, but countless solar systems in the galaxy, and likewise with the many galaxies beyond. Ultimately, the Cosmic Word resounded into manifestation and created the physical universe.



The radiant sun that all people see in the daytime sky is the physical visible reflection of the inner invisible Sun, which itself is the local reflection of the Universal Christos or Logos whereby the Great Architect caused the whole Creation into manifestation. You are located in Although there are countless stars in the galaxy, and countless galaxies in the universe, there are many levels throughout the Microcosm and Macrocosm of existence, demonstrating the principle of “as above so below.” Therefore, all of these celestial bodies, large and small, are reflections of the Universal Christos.

Furthermore, the Logos is the focal point of spirit-energy, or divine principle of unfolding activity throughout the whole Cosmos, from our own solar system to the whole creation. The Christos is also referred to as the Sun/Son by mystics, as our local sun is actually the reflection of the Universal Sun, as the Cosmic Christ.

In our world, The Christos is the Divine Voice, and manifests as *gnosis* or divine wisdom that is imparted to mankind through various great teachers and teachings given throughout time, or as spiritual guidance and revelation as received in deep meditation. Therefore, since the Divine Consciousness is found in each human being, the Christ becomes the voice of intuition, the still small voice of your inner Self, which is one with God’s Self. Also, from the beginning, the Christos is considered the emanation of the Sound of Creation which resonates throughout the Cosmos, and devotees of various traditions speak this forth by chanting the OM.

These are aspects of the Ancient Wisdom Teachings, of which the intellect only comprehends what is termed the Lesser Mysteries, whereas the Greater Mysteries are realized beyond this, and can be seen and experienced in meditation.

To be clear, the Master Jesus was the conduit for the Christos, and so were the other great spiritual teachers and avatars throughout the ages, at least as far as this planet is concerned.

Since this solar system is not the limit of the greater reality, due to the principle of “as above so below,” you could say the solar system is a microcosm of the universe, and the sun can be seen as the local version and reflection of the Cosmic Christ of the whole creation. Hence, ultimately the Cosmic Creator’s Word caused the whole Creation of the Universe to come into

being, and it ever unfolds. This is a living universe, for the Living Creative Principle fills its entirety.

One of the great questions the seeker asks is, "Who am I really?" What you really are is not this body, nor your mind, nor your emotions. You are not the actions, the desires, the emotions, the thoughts, the experiences, etc. You are the divine spark of Life that God breathed forth to form a living soul, for God's Spirit dwells within you, and you are one with that Divine Spirit. When you realize and experience this fact, you will be entering the Cosmic Consciousness, which is the Divine Consciousness of the Creator of the Universe and all Existence. Someday you will have this wondrous experience, but it begins with your initial awakening in the whole Unfoldment process of the mystical Initiatory Path.

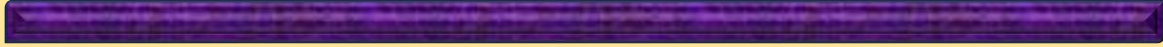
The divine life spark, this real Self that you are, is the pivotal point where you and God meet. It is where you realize that God is truly within you. It is where you and God become one. It is where a drop of water becomes one with the ocean again. It is where you realize the reality of "The Creator and I are one." You will realize that the God within is the reality of your true inner Self, the God-Self. Although you can say that God manifests through you, you will soon realize the God-Self is your true Source. You will realize and experience that you are, in essence, God, or more precisely, that God is you and everyone else. It is not exclusive, it is all-inclusive. When you realize that God is you, you also realize God is everyone. This realization is Divine Union, for this is "experiential spirituality," the essence of Mysticism. This is not something you can grasp intellectually, but it must be experienced internally.

Although it is true that "The Creator and I are one," it is a sublime truth that has been forgotten; therefore, it is a reality that awaits each person to discover. It cannot be understood merely with the human intellect, but must be realized and experienced deep within your heart and soul.

Likewise, the reality of Divine Union is not accepted by many churches or religions. The belief in separation from God is erroneous thinking, and will lead its adherents down a dark path.

God is the Living Spirit, the Creative Force, the Divine Being that has been hidden within the heart of mankind, and it is this Divine Source you must find. Once you as the aspirant on this Path gaze into the Cosmic Mirror within your soul, and no longer see a dense physical form, but see the inner Divine Self that you truly are, you have experienced one of the great Initiations, the Rising of the Self within, also called Self-Realization, and this is the beginning of Divine Union, for you will begin to hear the Divine Voice within that will guide you throughout your life now.

God will guide you as you begin this wonderful journey toward the Kingdom of God's Consciousness in your own heart of hearts. As you let this adventure unfold and you steadily walk the Mystical Path, let the Christos be your Lamp, your guiding Light.



Lesson Two

Second Foundation

Purification

Beginning the Purification Process

Purification is the second foundation of Light. Once you have Awakened spiritually, especially to the truth that Divine Consciousness is the most important reality in life, and you admitted the error of your ways, you begin the process of being purged and purified, which God shall initiate in you, as long as you allow it and not get in the way. You must place yourself before God and surrender, humbly and obediently, so that He will begin the process. As long as you open your eyes, your mind, and your heart to Him, He will cleanse you, purge you, and purify you from the old negative patterns of living.

Symbolically, purification is by water, as in the cleansing waters of the Spirit, and purging is by fire, that is fire of the Light that burns away negativity and dross you have accumulated over the years. It can be painful at times as these impure patterns well up to the surface of your conscious mind so that you have to deal with them and learn to be rid of them once and for all. This occurs more readily when you practice the Retrospection exercise each night, which will be given at the end of this lesson.

You must learn to trust in God without fear, far more than you trust yourself, for you will let yourself down quite often, but God will never let you down. Once you can trust God, having faith that He will only do what is in your best interest, then you can more easily surrender over to Him, as if you are falling into His arms, with absolute trust.

For the purification process to be effective, you must become detached from the negative ways of the physical world, which means you will find yourself yearning for the virtuous ways of the Divine. You will become purified as you learn to overcome earthly obstacles, becoming detached from them by renouncing them from your new way of life. But as long as you resist the purification process, this makes your Unfoldment difficult. People have a tendency to hang onto their old habits, compulsions, desires, thought processes, and belief systems. All of these reflect the mass mind of the physical world, which will only keep you earthbound. This is why learning detachment and renunciation is important in your spiritual progress.

“Here it must be known that, before this Divine fire of love is introduced into the substance of the soul, and is united with it, by means of a purity and purgation which is perfect and complete, this flame is wounding the soul, and destroying and consuming in it the imperfections of its evil habits; and this is the operation of the Holy Spirit, wherein He prepares it for Divine union and the transformation of its substance in God through love.”

4

This refers to the devotional aspect of the purification process, for when your heart's desire becomes God, with whom you grow in intimacy and spiritual love, you find yourself not minding the burning flame of love from your beloved Creator.

The Mass Mind of the World

This earthly world has been affected by the mass mind, which is symbolically a dark cloud hovering over people's heads. You could say that the heavy smog in some cities is symbolic of this mass mind, but don't take this too literally.

This carnal, earthly realm is an impermanent, limited form of existence to which you do not want to become attached. Rather, you should yearn for God's Eternal and Infinite Reality. You wish to be in harmony with God, and to reflect the reality of the Light, Life, and the Love of the Christos, that which the world cannot offer. So as this Mystical Path is the one you have chosen to pursue, as you abandon the negative ways of the dense physical world, then the process of purification will proceed more easily.

Let us make it clear here that the world you live in and the whole Universe is essentially the wonderful Creation of the Divine Creator. The essence of the physical Universe reflects God's Reality, Beauty, and Harmony whether you realize it or not, for it resonates a purer aspect of God's manifestation in this world, and you can learn from this, particularly by God's expression through Nature. God's imprint is in this world, and since you are an intrinsic part of Nature and the whole Universe, God's imprint is within you, within your very soul. Although you can look to this Universal Nature, observing and learning many things from her, you should look “within” yourself above all, where God's reality is reflected in a more direct way. Then you shall learn to move past mankind's negativity and limitations which is essentially the mass mind that is in this world.

What we are saying is, while you are living in this world and learning lessons and growing, operating and functioning through it, you can still live from the place of God's Reality and Presence within you. That will uplift the energy of your immediate area within the world that you live. Likewise, detach yourself from the usual mass mind thinking of this world.

The mass mind is the negative and corruptive thinking of mankind that polluted this world in the first place. Ages ago, people began to believe or act as if they were separate from their Source, their Creator, and this is where the problems began. The well-known story of Adam and Eve who partook of the forbidden fruit is an allegory depicting mankind's decision to disobey his Creator, which led to his separation from the Divine Source. Since God gave mankind “free will,”

people could choose to use or abuse it, but the point is to learn from this process, no matter how long it takes them to realize that obeying the Creator is the key to their spiritual awakening and unfoldment, and eventually the dissolving of the illusion of separation they had adopted for so long. Once an aspirant realizes God is within him, deep inside his heart, that God is his Source, and the reality that "the Creator and I are one," there will be no more separation.

Using your Free Will

Free will is an important part of being a human being, because without it people would be mindless robots, and there would be no capabilities of creativity, imagination, and intuition. Likewise, there would be no process of learning and growth for the individual. While a soul experiences life in this dense physical world, it is required to learn and grow from its mistakes, and it must learn from all of its experiences, and the only way to do that is by using free will. It would almost seem pointless if a human being were created absolutely perfect, for then there would be no journey, and no point to the Initiations and spiritual unfoldment, no point to experiencing anything in this world, therefore there would be no excitement and adventure; perhaps existence would be rather monotonous and boring. The heights cannot truly be appreciated without experiencing the depths. Once you have lived in darkness, you can truly appreciate the Light. Once you have experienced countless errors and indulged in negative activities and ways of thinking, by choice of your own free will, you realize you have walked down an erroneous path, which begins to make you realize there is a pathway toward righteousness that exists that would be wiser to walk along. Therefore, it is through your free will that you will eventually realize that God's Will is the only True Way to follow. But this does require experience and realization, and finally the choice to follow this Mystical Path.

As soon as you accept that the mundane mass mind that cloaks this world is impermanent and unreliable, that it is ultimately illusory, that it holds no value for you, you are on your way out, you are unfolding accordingly. You have begun your journey home into the Spiritual Reality, the Kingdom of God, Divine Consciousness.

As soon as you realize this earthly world is the Dream World, and that you are merely dreaming in it, then you have begun to awaken from the dream of illusion and into the true Reality of God in all things.

Free will is a gift from God, although it is a double-edged sword, because it has positive and negative consequences. It gives you freedom to choose, to create, to grow, and not be confined to rigid stipulations. It is when you use your free will and entertain the darker side of the world, slipping into iniquitous ways, taking perilous risks, making mistakes, then you begin accruing negative karma. Yes, you learn from your errors, but don't be stuck in an endless cycle of repetition. It is like you are digging a ditch deeper and deeper, making it harder to climb out. Ultimately, whatever you choose to do as you apply your free will, you are always learning and growing because this earthly world is a school of learning and growing.

Karma simply means what you put out is what you get back, good or bad. If you are mean to another, this will soon come back to you. When you are helpful and kind to another, this too will return to you as well. This concept is found in Jesus Christ's teachings as well as that of Gautama Buddha's. When free will cuts both ways, you are applying the neutral principle of karma. We say it is neutral because it can be used positively or negatively. This philosophy is quite popular with many people, although individuals who disbelieve in it are those who have succumbed to the mass mind thinking of the world and believe they can get away with their actions as if there are no consequences.

Awakening from Sleep

Awakening is essential in order to begin purification, for then you are aware of the process taking place. You are aware of the negative path you once took so that you may walk and appreciate a more correct and righteous way of being. You will observe the old dross sloughing off through continual purification as you concentrate on more productive and spiritually refined ways of thinking and being.

As soon as you realize you were living in a sleep-state, or the darkness of forgetfulness, the Holy Light will guide you beyond and lead you toward Divine Consciousness, where you will begin to remember who and what you are.

When you recognize where you have been, you can leave it behind, then you can proceed into the Light. When a person lives in a sleep-state, this is a form of blindness to what is real around him as well as within him. He does not see what he is really thinking or doing, for he does not fully realize the consequences of his thoughts and actions. He is not admitting to himself or others the negative and deceptive way of life he is leading, for he is living in denial. In the sleep-state he does not fully see the deception and disharmony that he is wallowing in. He has been brainwashed, buying into the deception of the mass mind. When he realizes this by awakening, and by the assistance of the indwelling Light he has chosen, he can more easily make the decision to change his life. Likewise, during this sleep-state he is not seeing who and what he truly is; therefore, the Light is the clarity and reality of seeing who and what he truly is.

Most likely you are an aspirant who is no longer sleeping but has awakened, and is walking in this glorious path of the Holy Light, whether it is at the beginning stages or further along. Continuing your spiritual disciplines will keep you on this straight and narrow way, for the mass mind in the world is the way of deception and confusion, that which you have left behind. Although it tends to draw you in from time to time, ignore it and focus on the Light within.

In the purification process you are attempting to leave behind the ways of the world, however, to do this you must focus on the reality and the Light of God within.

“We cannot turn away from the world unless we turn towards God. We can only free ourselves from the desires that imprison us in this world through the greater desire that we have for God.”⁵

In this way you have a clear and definite goal, for you are allowing yourself to be purged and purified for the sake of uniting with the Creator. Your love for the Divine must become a driving force that urges you onward and gives you strength and perseverance. From this your journey will not be arduous but it will become a great adventure!

From Attachment to Detachment

When you go through the purification process, you begin to realize that all your old habits and patterns and negative ways of living were just clutter and debris, nothing of value at all, except experiences and mistakes to learn from. This dense dross is illusory and impermanent, which means once you have allowed these negative elements to surface, you must release them and not give them life. In other words, instead of hanging onto them or giving them any kind of attention, you release them completely, let them go, cast them into the fire of the Light of Christ to burn them off, and then you will be free from them. Unfortunately, people are attached to their ingrained problems and patterns that they have created over the years, or even for many lifetimes. Quite often such attachments are perpetuated through fear, which causes people to ignore their problems. Many of these patterns may be accumulated karmic debt that the soul endeavors to work off; therefore, these patterns keep popping up until the individual faces them and deals with them, instead of fearfully stuffing them back down inside the subconscious where he thinks they are safe.

On the contrary, this is where they do more harm, acting like a thorn digging into a wound, not allowing it to heal. This is why you as an aspirant on this Mystical Path must face these negative elements and release them. You must become detached from them and learn to be indifferent to them. There is nothing to be afraid of when they surface in your conscious mind. Sometimes people may feel like they are being attacked by these inner demons, but when they come forth, usually it means they are ready to be released, so this is the best time to face them and release them. Remember, these old negative patterns and inner demons or chimeras are not real. They are illusions that you believed were threatening and harmful to you, but since you gave them life, the reality of their harmful nature seemed all too real to you. Once you begin to apply positive patterns and spiritual virtues to your life, focusing on these, then the negative ways will become less and less. There will be a point where their temptation will be so meager, that you will be able to effortlessly walk away from them, continuing the ways of your new and better life in the Light of Christ.

The Art of Detachment

Try this little experiment. Find something you have absolutely no interest in, something to which you are totally indifferent, perhaps something tangible and solid, like a simple rock. For this you should go outside and find such a plain rock and pick it up and hold it in your hand. Now close your eyes and focus on a particular negative pattern that has been bothering you, such as a compulsion to criticize and judge others, or a tendency to be vengeful, or to get angry at people, etc. Then immediately concentrate and project this into the rock in your hand, so that in effect the rock and this negative pattern have become one. Now take that rock and toss it away. Then turn around and walk away while you focus on a positive virtue, and there are many, such as purity of spirit, compassion for others, service to mankind, patience, humility, sincerity, and so on. (If nothing else, you can visualize this as a thought-experiment.)

You can think of other ways to learn detachment from those things that hold you back, whether they physical or emotional.

Using a different analogy, when you move from one home to another, packing your possessions in boxes, quite often you find things you no longer need, and sometimes there are old things that you feel attached to that you don't need but just want. You will have to start a junk pile of possessions you don't need so they can be taken away. How much of an attachment are these things? Do you need them, or just want them? Do they represent a past you need to detach yourself from? Do they have some kind of sentimental value? Are they no longer useful to you and will they hold you back? This can be another thought-experiment if it helps, or you can look through your possessions in your home to find things you really don't need anymore, using these to reflect your inner possessions, then you throw them away.

If you wish to reflect God's Divine Reality, that which is righteous and virtuous and true, then you must begin practicing and living the principles and teachings of the Way of God's Reality, which reflects the attributes of Harmony, Righteousness, Eternity, and Infinity. Perhaps you can call these traits of the Creator's personality, but because God is beyond personality, we will call this God's "Universality." When you find yourself yearning for these deeper realities of the Creator, desiring to live and reflect the Reality of God's Way, you're coming closer to becoming one with this Divine Consciousness.

When you establish the tools of renunciation and detachment, or letting go of the old negative patterns you once lived, you are learning the way of spiritual surrender. You are learning to renounce the old ways and becoming detached from them is to become indifferent to them, very much like feeling indifferent about the rock you dropped and then walked away. While you feel indifferent to the old patterns, your yearning for the Divine Consciousness of God grows and continues. When this takes place you know the purification process is proving successful, knowing these spiritual tools have actually worked. But it continues throughout your life, as it functions whenever necessary

On the Mystical Path, you have begun to awaken to the Light, in which case you have made a conscious decision to not fall back into the ways of temptation that thrive in this world, for you

have chosen the virtuous Way of God. This is the beginning of purification. This is no easy task, and you do stumble from time to time. Therefore, you must learn to turn your stumbling blocks into stepping stones, and turn your mistakes into lessons learned, so that you do not fall into those traps repeatedly. You learn through trial and error, of course, so you must proceed without fear, always trusting in the Creator and Jesus Christ to guide and protect you on your journey of further awakening and purification.

As you continue the Retrospection exercise, this will assist you in the purification process. This is a method where you can separate the wheat from the chaff, where you can analyze and observe your own thinking process and actions in your daily life so that you can essentially step outside of yourself and look in. If you practice this form of self-analysis regularly, or every night before sleep, the purification will continue. At the end of each day, you are viewing all of your thoughts, actions, and words that day, to the best of your recollection, at least all those that seem to stand out, whether they are of a negative or positive nature. Decide which were mistakes by which you can learn, so that you can do better next time, and which were positive elements, by which to use as a standard of a righteous life.

Know that as you have stepped foot upon this Path into the Holy Light, then your awakening and purification have begun.

Tools of the Soul

The soul uses various tools for its growth, such as Retrospection, Concentration, Meditation, Contemplation, Study, Prayer, Worship, Service, and so on. These are vital Disciplines that guide your spiritual growth. For now, let us discuss Retrospection, for this is a very useful tool that deals with the negative patterns within that you must learn to discard. In this process you analyze yourself, in order to see these blocks and errors, bringing them out in the open and into the Light. Realize this method should be repeated daily, for successful results. It may take some time and genuine willingness to eliminate some of the more stubborn habit patterns you have lived with for so long.

Retrospection as a continuous discipline will indeed clear the path for your inner journey, to dispel the dross and to allow the Light to grow within you. For, in truth, the Light is not outside of you; it is already within you, but you must learn to tap into it and experience it more fully.

Committing to the Retrospection process will initiate purification, which will be the way of disposing of the clutter and dross within, hence, preparing you for receiving the Light of Christ.

There are various levels of Unfoldment, however, when you first awaken, you realize you have been asleep to a deeper reality in life. You realize that many of your past ways have been obstacles to your growth and that you need to begin a new way of life, a life in the Light within. Retrospection is an excellent way to observe your way of life, to clear out the old ways and to implement the new way in the Light.

There are two forms of Retrospection we will point out briefly here. The first involves analyzing your list of negative habit patterns and errors in general and working on them one by

one, but not necessarily in one sitting, preferably one or two items each day. Since these negative patterns often rear their heads during the day, you can work with each one as it crops up. The second involves a session before retiring each night and reviewing the day's events. You will find this exercise at the end of the lesson.

Change is a Constant

If you have already begun major changes in your inner life, and you are already going through a transformation process, then much of what we have discussed may sound familiar. However, you can always learn more, and there will always be further changes in your life; you can be sure of this. While you are here in this physical world, you will always be going through changes and stages of unfoldment and transformation. Change is required on all levels of the unfoldment process. One key principle you should know while living in this world is that change is a perpetual constant. Foster an attitude of always welcoming opportunities for change.

Of course, the universal principles you see in nature and the universe or a different kind of constant, as expressed in what scientists call the laws of physics, for example.

Purity is one of many virtues on your spiritual journey. Achieving purity of heart, mind, and soul is the goal of the purification process, for this cleansing opens the door so that the inner Self can fully manifest and function through your earthly vehicle. When you are bound by the dross of too many old patterns, your true Being is not able to function totally as it should. If you recall the analogy of the freely flowing river, remember that it cannot flow properly when there are too many dams blocking its way. The purification process dissolves these dams in your river, so that it may flow strong and free, unencumbered by the old habits and patterns.

Your soul's progress is also similar to the ascent of a hot air balloon, which is held down by numerous sandbags. The object is to release all the bags so that the balloon may continue to ascend higher, but the logic and thinking of this world have twisted this around, making you think that you must hang on to these bags as if they were precious items, therefore they keep you practically earthbound. You have to see through the illusion of the importance of these bags, for they are a hindrance to your progress. They are simply bags of sand with no value and no more. When you realize this, you will begin to throw them over the side of the basket, and the balloon will rise higher. Once all of the bags have been thrown over, you are no longer bound, but you are free to ascend indefinitely. Being able to let go of these sandbags, realizing they have no value, and tossing them over is part of the purification process.

When you desire real change in your life, this is when you start truly living in the Light. The Light will change you. It will draw up and out all the negative patterns so that you can see them clearly in order to get rid of them. This is as it should be. This purification process does tend to be uncomfortable because each individual has a certain amount of resistance to the Light, which means he is resisting the change, but this is to be expected. If you truly seek the Light, you will be willing to struggle through the gauntlet of your past, all of the accumulated dross, negative habits, thought patterns, behaviors, attitudes, errors, etc. View these as circumstances and mistakes

by which you can learn and grow. You don't want to spend time feeling miserable and guilty about such things. Remember to turn your stumbling blocks into stepping stones. Cast the dross and debris into the burning fire of the Christos, hence, being purged. Practicing Retrospection nightly will create a firm positive pattern of the purifying and purging process so that your life will become a positive, uplifting, joyous experience.

The interior cleansing is continual while you walk this journey into deeper Light, yet it is not always as intense. It doesn't have to be such a hardship if you don't resist the inner workings of the Light. It's like maintaining a beautiful garden where weeds always grow too, so periodically you need to pull and toss these weeds out, big and small. You have to keep this up to allow your garden to become weed-free.

You are becoming cleaner and clearer and your spiritual and emotional health is greatly improving. The healing transformation has done a lot of work but is still in progress, as long as it is needed.

As we have mentioned before, negative patterns cannot harm you, although sometimes people imagine they can, which is why you try to ignore them. Only stuffing them back down inside is harmful. Ignoring them and hiding them in the dark recesses of your subconscious is counter-productive. Denying them, as if they didn't exist will create a festering wound that will not heal until you face these issues and let them out in the open air, one by one. The key is to let the Light draw them out. The intensity of the Light will draw them to the surface, into your conscious mind. The action of the Light acts as a magnifying lens under which any negative aspects cannot be hidden but will be revealed. Then you can take them, one at a time, and cast each one into the burning fire of the inner Light within to dissolve them in your retrospective meditation. If there is a particular item that continues to give you problems, you must focus on this in the retrospective process continually, day after day, if necessary, until it is finally dissolved, and then you move on to the next item. This is not a one-time process by any means. But as you keep practicing this discipline, you will feel spiritually cleaner, purer, and uplifted, like a load has been lifted from your shoulders, since you cast those imperfections into the burning fire of the Light.

You might experience a cleansing feeling and a sense of peace within yourself. Some aspirants may feel an indescribable Love, the Love that emanates from the Christos within. When you feel this inner Love, you are also feeling the Light, because Light and Love are aspects of the Spirit, the Spirit of Christ Consciousness.

In your prayers, let this Love-Light shine forth to all those you know in your life, all those in the greater community, all those in your country, and all those across the rest of the world. Likewise, the Christos will shine its healing Light through you and all Light-workers who serve in the Holy Work, for every Light-being that shines counts in this process of healing and transforming the world. The main goal is World Illumination, as many aspirants assist the Master Jesus and other great teachers and avatars and the Heavenly Hosts in this Holy Work. This whole process will take time and patience, and as many Light-workers as possible, for they continually keep their Light shining brightly, for the sake of uplifting all mankind. Therefore, you are not alone; your brothers and sisters in the Light are at work, whatever path they may be on. The Great Christos, which

manifests through the Master Jesus and many other great teachers and avatars, will be shining brightly as well.

“My soul doth magnify the Lord.” –Luke 1:46

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Spiritual Exercise 1

Retrospection


1. Remember, this is to be done right before retiring each night. Relax in a sturdy chair and say a brief prayer to the Creator for forgiveness and guidance that you may see certain imperfections you should work on and then ask how you should deal with them.

2. Then review the day’s events, observing any particular thought processes, actions, or words spoken, any mistakes or errors, and any other experiences that require your attention, whether they be positive or negative. Be sure to ask God for forgiveness of any errors, and to bless any individuals you may have offended that day. Bless each person you have encountered. Look at each mistake or error and see how you can learn from it, or observe any incidents where you made the right decision, and make note of these. You can move forward, from morning to night, as things normally progress. But if something naturally or suddenly rears its head, clearly you need to investigate this particular area. It may be some irritating situation, a nagging dilemma, or a recurring problem you need to deal with. This leads to the next step.

3. In the case of an unresolved or disturbing incident that crops up, ask God for his assistance and guidance, so that you may see how to deal with it. Then ask for his peace and Light to fill you, while you await inspiration. You may receive an answer now, or even later, the next day perhaps, so be patient. But during the session, cast these bothersome items into the Light to dispel any negative energy. If it helps, you can use visualization and cast old rubbish into a bright fire, as in the fire of the Light of Christ, letting it burn up.

4. End the exercise with a prayer of thanksgiving to your Creator.

Note: You will benefit from this practice more if it becomes a regular routine in your life. However, at this point in your progress, it will serve as a period of awakening and purification as you perform this Retrospection exercise. You may wish to write your observations in a notebook, to note your progress. For further information on retrospection, see the article in **Stepping Stones Along the Path**.



Lesson Three

Third Foundation

Illumination

The Radiant Sun of Illumination

Illumination is the third foundation of the Light. Once you have spiritually awakened and you are observing that your old way of life and all of its negative patterns are not fulfilling you, then the purification process is taking effect. This interior cleansing process involves discarding the old carnal ways of thinking and acting, and all the habits from the past. The process of genuine awakening and purification will lead you into Illumination.

Think of it as having an old-fashioned glass lantern that is caked with dirt and mud, concealing the light within; therefore, once you have cleaned it off completely, the inner flame will shine brightly through this clear glass.

Through discipline, devotion, and surrender, this initiatory process will unfold and you will soon receive the Light of Christ, if this hasn't occurred already. If you have ever beheld the warmth and radiance of the noonday sun with half-closed eyes and using your peripheral vision, this may give you an idea. But know that the spiritual and Holy Light is so much greater than that, and it is experienced within you, not outside of you.

The physical light of the sun is a reflection and symbolic of the greater Light. When you behold the true radiant Sun within yourself, which merely reflects the outer sun, then you will behold the deeper reality of Christ Consciousness.

The mystical archetype known as the Sun/Son represents the esoteric reality of the Christos. The physical sun is at the center of this solar system, but as the inner Sun it reflects and personifies the Cosmic Christos of the entire universe. Archetypally, the physical sun becomes the spiritual Son of God, the Christos, although in truth humanity comprises many sons of the Creator, or we could say sons and daughters all.

You can behold the radiance of the sun in the sky, but beholding the radiance of the inner sun within your being is a deep mystical experience.

Since the Biblical scriptures refer to "the only-begotten son," esoterically this has to do with the inner sun of the Christos, as reflected by the outer sun of this solar system, for it is the only sun therein. You could say that Jesus Christ is the outer representation of this, as pertains to Christian Mysticism essentially, although ultimately all teachers and avatars and all human beings are sons and daughters of the Creator.

When you commit to the spiritual exercises in the practice of meditation, the avenue for experiencing and seeing the Holy Light will become real within you and all around you. Eventually, you will behold its Source, the great Christos, the splendorous Sun of Being, the Son of the Living God, the mystical Sun/Son.

Although all of humanity consists of many sons and daughters of God, reflecting the inner Sun, there is only one Sun, which is the Cosmic Christ. This reflects the principle of “as above so below,” or what we see in the microcosm reflects that which is in the macrocosm. Each soul is a reflection of the Cosmic Christ, and yet that burning SOULAR fire within is more than symbolic, but is REAL! This fire of the Holy Light burns away the dross and debris you have accumulated all these years, and lifetimes, that must be vanquished, so that the Light will shine pure and bright within you, and this will be seen in the Illumination.

The fact is, there is no exact science to receiving the Illumination, but we are helping you to put yourself in the right place so that you may learn to surrender over to it. It is given to you by God’s Grace, as long as you become open to it. Realize that this is a sentient Light, a Living Light that is the presence of the Divine Consciousness. When you think in terms of worshipping the Creator through prayer and meditation, and serving His people, your unfoldment will continue.

Remember this: “I strive to serve the Creator by serving mankind.”

When you seek the Light in meditation, using tools of concentration and breath control, you look within, but you may see nothing at first, so in this case you are opening yourself to the movement of the Spirit, and when you truly feel this Spirit moving through you, realize this is the Light moving through you, because the Light is the Spirit made visible. This should be a regular meditative practice, and this movement of the Spirit will eventually lead you to see within.

As your spiritual eyes open, they will behold the brilliance within, and eventually you will witness the true Son of God, the Christ within, in all his beauty and splendor. St. Paul spoke of “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Colossians 1:27) The radiating Holy Light is that glory of Christ dwelling within you. We pray that you shall experience and know this to be true in your own being.

“For souls can have no perception of their darkness until they come near to the Divine light, and only when the darkness has been driven out is the soul illumined and able to see the light, its eye having been cleansed and strengthened.”⁶

The Light brings out the dross of this darkness, which is why the soul goes through purification first, then his view of this radiant Light within becomes clearer, and then he is truly illumined. When this initiated aspirant in meditation is coming closer to a shroud or veil of materiality, the Light he has seen will lead him to the Source, to his true inner Being. These are profound experiences in the initiatory process, to be taken seriously.

Dispelling Myths of What Light Is

Many philosophers speak of the light of understanding, the light of wisdom, or the light of truth. These are all very fine ideas, but the true mystic will meditate upon the Light of Being, that Light which is the visible Life and Love and Spirit of God. You can say that Light is made visible, and that Love is the expression. Light is the Life of the radiating Spirit. Yet this Light is unseen to most but seen to the mystic whose spiritual eyes have opened, whose heart has awakened, and whose mind has been illumined. These things of the true Light of God are not easily understood, yet they can be experienced in the heart, mind, and body.

Love is the Light felt in the heart. Life is Light flowing through you, that is, the Life that “En-Lightens” your entire being. Peace is the Light found in the stillness within the soul, and when you have gone deep in meditation, this calming silence pervades your entire being. Joy is the Light of the ecstasy of being alive in the Spirit. Harmony is the Light when you enter absolute balance with God’s Nature. When you experience the Illumination, Light is the Spirit made visible and experienced in the depth of your being.

Above all, Illumination is the Light growing and filling your entire being, and the transformation of your human nature into its deeper divine nature. Many students may view Illumination as a flash of insight or revelation, or a deeper, clearer understanding of something. Such a definition is true to a degree. But this is an exoteric, fundamental concept only. True Illumination is the reality of the Being of the Christos growing and expanding within your body, mind, and soul, to where you clearly feel it, see it, and experience it on a much deeper level than before. In reality, it is realizing and experiencing the Holy Light that has always been there all along. Illumination is awakening into the Light of Christ, but to the point where this Light becomes a very real part of you, it becomes you and you become it, for in essence YOU ARE LIGHT!

As all atoms and molecules of your body are filled with Light, since in essence they are Light on the highest energetic level, then your whole body will be full of Light.

“The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.” –Matthew 6:22.

This is an important key to receiving the Light. This refers to making a concentrated effort, especially in conducting spiritual disciplines, especially meditation; therefore, when your eye is single, when you are laser-focused on only one thing, focusing on your inner being, then your whole being will be filled with Light.

Illumination as Transformation

Illumination is transformation of the whole being, not just on a spiritual level. This occurs also on the physical, mental, and emotional levels. On the physical, the Light causes regeneration and healing in your flesh body. On the mental, your mind becomes attuned with the Mind of Christ, or Christ Consciousness. On the emotional, you become attuned to your inner heart. On the spiritual level, your soul, along with all of its accumulated past experiences, becomes refined and

transmuted into a much higher nature of being, into a divine nature. In the experience of Illumination you are actually “Christed.” You are anointed through the Baptism of Fire. You are experiencing communion in Christ; you are coming into union with Christ, hence, being divinely “christed” you are being transformed into Christ and entering true Sonship. Ultimately, you are entering Divine Union with God. For the “christed Master Jesus did say, “I and my Father are One.” Let it be so among you.

When you look deep into yourself through meditation, you begin to realize this oneness of being, wherein the Creator and you are one.

On this Mystical Path, going through these Initiations can sometimes be disorienting and does not make sense at first. In this process you are literally losing your mind, your lower mind that was influenced by the earthly world. And then you will become familiar with the Divine Mind, or what some may call the Mind of Christ.

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” –Philippians 2:5

Certain traditions, especially those that derived from long ago, have stringent dogmatic roots that claim enlightenment is too difficult to attain and can take many lifetimes to achieve. They give you the feeling that it is practically unattainable, as if the door is closed to most people. These are false claims, especially in this current age as the earth plane and the consciousness of humanity rise higher, slowly but surely. You must move with the flow if you don’t want to be left behind.

There have been cases, particularly in certain cults, where religious leaders wanted to suppress their students and keep themselves in a lofty position, hence, keeping initiations at bay. This is dishonest and selfish. A true teacher wants nothing more than to uplift his students to the highest level of attainment possible.

The Illusion of the World

In both Buddhism and Hinduism, the principle of Maya is observed. The things of this world are not what they appear. It is essentially devoid of true spirituality since it is immersed in materiality. This world tends to conceal the true nature of God’s Reality; therefore, lacking the reality of the true inner Self. Likewise, the mass mind creates the illusion that the world is real and solid. Paradoxically, at the atomic level there is vast spaciousness within a single atom, hence, an object consisting of billions and trillions of atoms perpetuates the illusion of a solid mass.

When you hit your fist into the wall and it does not go through, or lay in your bed and not fall through, a subtle energy force prevents this, creating the illusion of solidness. When you see the picture of a galaxy, it seems like a large massive object of light, but when you come in closer, entering it, you observe billions of stars with vast amounts of space between them. This suggests the principle of “as above, so below.” That which holds true in the atomic world also holds true in the cosmic universe. Hence, you can perceive the illusion, the seeming solidness of objects.

The personality of this world consists of deception, limitation, separation, solidity, and many other negative traits, all aspects of Maya.

This world is real on its own level – that is, it seems very real to you. However, from the standpoint of Eternity and Infinity, it is NOT real. It has no lasting substance, no integrity, no consistency in reality at all. It consists of separation, boundaries, borders, mistrust, fear, and war. All this seems very real since you are right in the middle of it. Although these are factors that are perishable and not real, the deception of the illusion will tell you otherwise, for that is the nature of Maya. You cannot completely trust your physical senses, especially when it comes to the realities of spirituality. These are very limited faculties in this world because you only see what is on the surface. But you can learn to align yourself with your intuitive faculties. Once you begin perceiving things through your spiritual senses, you will begin to discern the deception from the truth. You will learn to see the seen as the illusion and to see the unseen as that which is real, eternal, and harmonious.

Those who declare that they only believe what they see in front of them are deceiving themselves. What they see is only a tiny fragment of the whole picture, and it is a very deceptive fragment at that. This is why people live in illusion; they don't see the whole picture. Once a person begins to open his inner senses and see more of the deeper levels of existence, he begins to see more of God's Reality, whereby the illusion is being dissipated. This is quite often a gradual process of inner awakening. You will be awakening from the illusory mass mind and entering the realm of a deeper Reality.

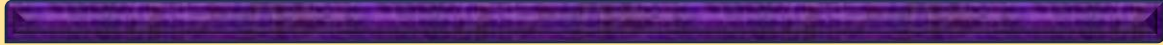
This is where the need for purification enters in, for you must be purified of this mass mind illusion and its form of negative thinking. You wish to reflect God's harmony, righteousness, joy, peace, and oneness, that which the world cannot offer. Once the attributes of purification are setting in, this clears the way for you to receive and see the Light, hence, entering illumination. Then genuine transformation begins.

This is why the tool of meditation is highly important, for it cuts through the illusion of this world and guides you into the real Reality of Divine Consciousness.

When you are learning to meditate, it is important to practice concentration first, for when you learn to focus on only one thing alone, one thought, one image, or one subject, then you will gain much insight, and you will begin to experience deeper realities.

When you meditate upon the indwelling Light, the tool of concentration will guide you through the process.

The ember of awakening grows into the living flame of the Illumination.



Lesson Four

Fourth Foundation

Transformation

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Transformation is the fourth foundation of the Light. Genuine Illumination of your whole being brings genuine transformation. Since you began applying certain disciplines and then started experiencing purification, letting go and surrendering into the Light in the process, you will be filled with the Light. You are submitting to God who is greater than you or anything else. And this Light begins revealing those things you no longer need which may be hindrances to further growth. As you grow in deeper awakening, you begin discarding these old ways and begin living your new way of life. Then, as the dross is clearing away, the Light begins revealing to you your own deeper nature, the true divine being you really are inside. Your true nature reflects the inner Sun of the Universal Christos that shines in your heart and the hearts of all beings, although they know it not, for it lies unrealized in many people. It is in this dawning awareness, this deeper awakening that you become truly transformed, as the Light expands more fully in your body and mind, deepening your consciousness into a greater awareness of God within you.

The Light of Christ, as it grows in you, will reveal the God-Being you truly are and always have been, although you have been asleep to it for so long. This realization causes real transformation on all levels. For the wall of separation and illusion is being lifted now. The veil of materiality is wearing thin now and you begin to see who and what you really are. You most likely have heard the still small voice within, the voice of God in the silence, and this voice or inner impulse has been leading you onward and inward, whether you were aware of it or not, to deeper areas of the Reality of God's Being. What we call intuition is God's voice and guidance within. You must learn to recognize and heed this divine voice at all times, whenever you hear it. To listen for and to hear God's Will within, and to obey it is your task now. You can only be truly transformed when you surrender to God, by giving up all things, and following what God directs you to do. God is always first in your life. This is reflected in the following verse: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." – Matthew 6:33

"For the flesh profits nothing, as St. John says, but has rather been a hindrance to the spiritual good; and the soul grieves that a life which is so high should be obstructed by another that is so low, and therefore begs that this web may be broken. This life is called a web for three reasons: first, because of the bond that exists between spirit and flesh; second, because it makes a division between God and the soul; third, because even as a web is not so opaque and dense but that the light can shine through it, even so in this state this bond

appears to it to be a very fine web, since it is greatly spiritualized and enlightened and refined, so that the Divinity cannot but shine through it.”⁷

When St. John of the Cross speaks of a web, what is being referred to is the “veil” within your being, the veil of materiality, the veil of accumulated dross that hinders the Light, which is why you practice the spiritual disciplines, to dissolve this veil. And once you begin seeing the indwelling Light, being illumined by it, and you begin to see its Source, the God-Self within, then the veil has been rent. This is what is termed the Rising of the Self, or Self-Realization by some schools.

Often, a spiritual teacher will guide you on this Mystical Path, to show you how to contact your Divine Source within. Although this advanced soul will give you sound instructions at first, which are based on his or her own ability to obey God within, this teacher will ultimately teach you to recognize and discern this inner voice, to clearly hear it, so that you may faithfully obey it. The spiritual teacher merely assists you; however, you must do the work for yourself, then you will be able to follow the guidance of the True Teacher within, which is God, or as certain mystics call it the God-Self.

The common techniques for developing inner contact are prayer, meditation, and contemplation. However, meditation requires the preliminary steps of developing genuine concentration within. A mind that can't keep focused can't properly meditate. Certain breathing and relaxation techniques will guide you to concentrate, therefore, once you've learned to master the art of concentration, you will be able to truly meditate successfully. Then you will discover that entering deeper into meditation will lead to transformation.

At first, distractions will interfere, random thoughts and outside sounds, which you learn to cut through with concentration. Once you are getting the hang of meditation on a daily basis, you may find yourself settling into a peaceful state, or a feeling of upliftment and joy, and sometimes you might even receive an impression, or an urging to do something, sometimes you might see a glimmer of Light within, or something more profound. The results you might receive in meditation are innumerable, and likewise with other spiritual exercises. Because you are opening your soul to a higher reality, a deeper reality within, transformation has begun.

Entering and experiencing the Light leads you into genuine transformation, for it dredges up the negative patterns and breaks them up so they can be dissipated, to allow the positive, virtuous ways of living to begin. Transformation through the Light is the releasing of the old ways and living God's Righteous Way that will guide you into further spiritual unfoldment. Therefore, certain disciplines must be established for this to take place.

We have discussed the application of certain spiritual disciplines, such as Prayer, Meditation, Contemplation, Retrospection, Concentration, Study, Service, and Worship. These can become enjoyable, relaxing modes of expression when they become sincere devotional aspects, a means of worshiping and loving God in everything you do. It is your yearning and enthusiasm for the Divine that drives you onward in your spiritual journey, and this will guide you on how to truly surrender over to the Creator. Above all, God's Grace is interwoven into these

elements as you apply them sincerely in your life. Then you will experience genuine transformation.

Real transformation is through the heart, for love causes genuine change in your life. You will come to experience that love for the Creator, love of the Creation, and love toward mankind is the true behavior of an Illumined being, for such a one will be an example to others who seek the Mystical Path, which in reality is the path of the spiritual Initiation, for through this you will be transformed and realize the God Being within, realizing that you are one with It.

The yearning heart will find God, and you will find God within the heart, for this Union causes real transformation.

The straight and narrow way involves dedicated discipline and true devotion that leads to Illumination and the Rising of the God-Self within. Discipline and devotion working together form the balance of mind and heart. Discipline is training your body, mind, and emotions to be fine-tuned for entering the inner reality of Divine Consciousness. Devotion is your perseverance and love toward your Creator, which in essence is the God-Self within you. And when you apply the tools of prayer and meditation, you are learning to contact the Divine Being within, to hear the inner voice. This is how you worship God. Remember the three keys of spiritual unfoldment: yearning for God, service to mankind, and self-attainment. These three keys function together, for they express three directions: God, mankind, and self. This is a mystical trinity that essentially leads to Divine Unity.

Yearning for the God within is the expression of your love and worship. Service to mankind involves your calling to do what God expects you to do, the work of uplifting the consciousness of humanity, even if it's one person at a time. Self-attainment involves the usual disciplines we have discussed. The secret here is that when you are applying meditation and the exercises that guide you within, you are likewise experiencing yearning for God, hence, two keys become intertwined and united. Likewise, by going forth to serve God's children, to uplift their consciousness, you are doing His work, a part of your love and worship of Him. The point is to practice these three keys on the straight and narrow path, which will eventually open to boundless freedom, because when you truly go within, experiencing true transformation, a whole universe of infinite and eternal scope will be opened to you! The true Kingdom of Heaven is within your own being!

True mystics know that when they have gotten themselves out of the way, there is nothing left but God who is doing the work in the earth plane, for through this sublime humility they have truly been transformed.

The mind and heart of the aspirant must be purified, illumined, and transformed, for all earthly wants and desires must be shed. The true desire of the heart is to return to the Creator, for it is the purified yearning heart that leads you on this mystical journey toward unity with the Divine Consciousness.

This is why we say that awakening leads to purification, which in turn leads to Illumination, which in turn leads to transformation, which in turn finally leads to Divine Union.

We pray that you continue this wondrous journey toward total transformation into your true Divine nature!

Spiritual Exercise 2

Concentration Exercise

The Orange

We offer a very ancient concentration exercise, where the student focuses his vision on an orange for at least ten minutes, without distraction. After several weeks, if done properly, this method will show definite results in your ability to concentrate. Focusing and concentrating within is a key that leads to Illumination and transformation.

1. Place an orange upon a table about 1 ½ feet from you, as you sit in a straight-backed chair. Now, sit quietly and relax, eyes closed at first, as you allow your thoughts to subside and eventually cease.

2. Now, open your eyes, and examine slowly and completely the surface of the orange. Let your eyes slowly drift to the center of the orange, and look within it as if you are imagining it as it is inside, for in reality you ARE seeing within it. Keep your eyes focused as you look within it, and examine the various segments, shapes, colors, sizes of the pieces, and the seeds within the orange.

3. After a few minutes of this phase of your concentration, examine a seed, studying it, from its outer shell and into its various layers. Then take this seed and place it into the ground, planting it firmly. Having watered it, see it bearing roots and sprouting forth, growing into a small bush, then a tree, and then bearing a blossom, and finally a tiny bead within it which grows into a full fruit. You once again have returned to the orange.

Do not rush the visualization process, but carry it out slowly and in a relaxed state. Whenever you feel tense, breathe slowly and relax into the orange.

Remember that this simple exercise represents your universe and that Jesus said, after taking on the Christ aspect, “Only through me shall you see the face of the Father.” This orange is round like the sun. It is also the path to God the Creator; likewise, it represents in form and symbolism the shape of this solar system, the local creation of God in which we all live.

The orange is also subdivided into segments, the same as the segments of the solar system and its divisions of the 12 houses of the natal astrological chart. Hence, the seeds of the orange symbolically represent the planets of the solar system in the different houses of the Zodiac.

Under the influence you gain control of mind so that you may reach the Mind of God, so that you may reach the Self within which you are seeking.

Therefore, you see that in this simple concentration exercise, which is more than four thousand years old, you have the symbolism of God, the Sun (Son), and of this solar system, and eternal life.

If at any time during this exercise you are distracted, or a thought enters in, then stop where you are at, relax, letting your thoughts subside and cease once again, then start the exercise from the beginning.

Do not do this more than three times a sitting and no more than two to three times a day. The complete exercise should take between ten to fifteen minutes.

For further information on the practice of concentration, read the article in **Stepping Stones along the Path**.



Lesson Five

Fifth Foundation

Unity

Unity is the fifth foundation of the Light. Genuine transformation leads to Unity with God. This is the path of the true mystic, to seek *Unio Mystica*, the union of the soul with God as its Divine Source.

This is accomplished through love and surrender. However, the reality is that you are realizing the God-Self that you truly are. This sublime realization cannot come from the intellect, for it is a matter of experiencing the very depth of your true being.

Experiencing Divine Union through the initiatory path is a gradual progression along a spectrum, beginning with realizing that God is definitely REAL and not just a religious idea. Then as you develop an intimacy with the Creator within, you learn to hear His voice and receive impressions from this Source. You are creating a real bond, the divine bond that is between the lover and the Beloved. Although you are born in this physical world, through the initiations you are learning to walk in the spiritual world, where God's Presence resides, which is in your own being, wherein you are reaching the actuality of this Divine Unity, where you have finally stepped aside and allow God to come through you in your thoughts, actions, words, and everything. The finality is something beyond words and intellect and is the reality of sheer mystical experience. And yet, this is just the beginning of the continuing journey. Great teachers, masters, and sages who no longer needed to reincarnate have chosen to do so regardless, committing to the great service of the upliftment of mankind in this world. They are the evidence of the experience of Divine Union. In Buddhism they are called bodhisattvas.

St. John of the Cross, a contemplative mystic from the medieval ages, wrote about this sublime state of being, and practiced certain spiritual disciplines, then taught these to his students. We will examine a few passages from his classic work, *Dark Night of the Soul*.

“Inasmuch as it is the loving wisdom of God, God produces striking effects in the soul, for by purging and illumining it, he prepares it for the union of love with God.”⁸

Later he says, “This is not else but his illumination of the understanding with supernatural light, so that it is no more a human understanding but becomes Divine through union with the Divine. In the same way the will is enkindled with Divine love, so that it is a will that is now no less than Divine, nor does it love otherwise than divinely, for it is made and united in one with the Divine will and love.”⁹

He continues: “And thus this soul will be a soul of heaven, heavenly and more Divine than human. All this, as we have been saying, and because of what we have said, God continues to do and to work in the soul by means of this night, illumining and enkindling it divinely with yearnings for God and for naught else whatsoever.”¹⁰

This Divine Union is a very real experience in the growing mystic’s life. The student endeavors sincere striving that begins with the heart’s yearning for the Divine. By learning to surrender the old ways and to begin living on the Mystical Path, you will eventually reach this sublime reality of being. Many metaphysicians call this place you reach Cosmic Consciousness, which is the same as Divine Consciousness, or you might refer to it as Christ Consciousness. Whatever you choose to call it, this reality of expanding your consciousness into God’s Consciousness until unity begins as a very real phenomenon, and it will become more and more real and tangible as you unfold deeper into it, for it is a gradual process of spiritual development. The unseen becomes the seen, and the unheard becomes the heard. He who has eyes to see and ears to hear will perceive and comprehend the mysteries of God’s Wisdom and will begin to live in the heavenly state of the Mind of Christ, and to experience the Heart of Christ in genuine service to God by serving mankind.

The goal of Divine Union begins in the aspirant’s awakening, which we discussed in the first lesson. Then through purification he begins working toward and soon enters the Illumination, which is a gradual process. Although you will have your first experience of the Light, you will undergo several episodes of experiencing, feeling, or seeing this Light of Christ from this point on. Likewise, insights of divine wisdom will come periodically as well, especially as you become available for this in meditation, or throughout the day as you develop divine contact within, for you are learning to listen to the God-Self within. Hence, you will begin a genuine transformation of body, mind, heart, and soul. As the process continues, while your inner yearning grows stronger, and you learn to surrender to God, learning humility and obedience to the Divine, then you will be walking the path into Divine Union. Early Christian mystics explained three paths in one along the Mystical Way, which was basically a stair-step process. These three steps are:

- The Purgative Way
- The Illuminative Way
- The Unitive Way

All three of these have been touched on already, but we have explained them in five steps instead. Various spiritual systems may appear to be different, but in essence they complement each other, and when we compare and discuss such systems, we can elucidate certain elements that may seem otherwise unclear; therefore, filling in the gaps. The primary steps in this particular program we have covered are:

Awakening
Purification
Illumination
Transformation
Union

The Master Jesus Christ laid the foundation for steps of Unfoldment for those that would follow him, for they are the steps of Initiation using a Christian format, although other traditions will use different labels and frameworks. You can read about these steps through Jesus's mystical journey in the New Testament, however, below is a basic outline:

Baptism
Transfiguration
Crucifixion
Death
Resurrection
Ascension

There is yet another system of inner unfoldment found in certain schools of the Esoteric Sacramental Tradition, which describe the process of Esoteric Initiations, and these levels are as follows:

Baptism
Illumination
Self-Realization
God-Realization
Self-Mastery

Such systems we have suggested above are various ways to outline and explain possible steps in the unfoldment process that certain mystical schools call the Ancient Initiatory Path.

We have explained these principal foundations of unfoldment into the Holy Light, so that you may have a basic understanding of this particular path, the path of spiritual Initiations, which is essentially the way to grow closer to God, to experience communion with God, and finally to enter union with God, or Divine Consciousness. When you realize there is no separation between God and yourself, for such a separation is sheer illusion, you will indeed experience and live in this most sublime Divine Union. Remember that "The Creator and I are one."

"The center of the soul is God... Love unites the soul with God, and, the more degrees of love the soul has, the more profoundly does it enter into God and that more is it centered in Him."¹¹

This 16th-century mystic was ahead of his time when he discussed spiritual unfoldment. He clearly understood and experienced the initiatory process. The only way to clearly write about such matters is by experiencing them firsthand, hence, the mystic has accomplished his work and can properly pass on these esoteric teachings.

Spiritual Exercise 3

The Movement of the Spirit

In this exercise, you will relax in your chair, close your eyes, and go within. Begin with slow, deep breathing and focus on this for a few minutes. Using concentration, let your mind focus on the Light, not necessarily visually, but the point is to begin *feeling* it. As you continue the breathing process, you will relax to enter a meditative state. Now, be open to the movement of the Spirit, and when you feel that movement, go with that movement, which will take you to the Light. Go with this sensation, let it take you where it wants to go, for you are completely safe in the Spirit, and because you are feeling the movement of the Spirit, the radiance of this beautiful Spirit of God *is* the Light.

Once again, the direction is to *feel* this movement of the Spirit within you, which means you are following the movement into the Light. If this leads you to seeing something, so be it. If it does not at first, don't worry about it. The more times you do this exercise, there will be definite uplifting results.

Important note: the point is not to consciously visualize something here, such as light of any sort, because that is a forced function. It is more important to *allow* your sight to open without forcing it. Let it come naturally. Indeed, many spiritual schools acknowledge the practice of visualization, and this tool is beneficial in certain situations; however, when it comes to allowing your spiritual sight to open, it is important to let this happen naturally, as in letting the Spirit guide you, which is why you must *feel* the movement of the Spirit within you.



Lesson Six

Conclusion: Culmination of the Foundations

Living your Spiritual Unfoldment

The Foundations of Light are integral steps to the whole Initiatory Path, from the beginning stages to the advanced stages. Although this course of study focuses on the Illumination, the overall foundations are steps along the whole Initiatory spectrum. Let us explain this. First, you have a spiritual awakening, and wake up to the fact that you have been sleeping, and now you become more sensitive to everything around you, for even your senses seem sharper. Negative elements will begin coming to the surface, from your subconsciousness up to your consciousness. You need not be alarmed about this, for it is the natural process of the awakening experience, for this is the beginning of the purification process. However, to control these upsurges, as pointed out before, we have offered certain disciplines, such as prayer, concentration, meditation, and contemplation, as well as the spiritual exercises provided for you.

As you find yourself living the process of Spiritual Unfoldment, these tools of the soul will encourage and sharpen your inner sensitivity, but they will also assist you during these flare-ups of negativity during the purification process. This process may prove uncomfortable but it is necessary to allow the debris to well up, so do not try to suppress this development. Some people may think ignoring or hiding from these negative elements will help, but this only hinders your development. When the negativity flares up, there is absolutely nothing to be afraid of, for it is similar to when you sweep a dirty floor, scoop up the debris and drop it in the wastebasket, instead of sweeping it under the carpet, which will only make things worse, especially after doing this too many times. When you let the negative debris come forth, you learn to simply let it go, by casting it into the Light of Christ, and you learn to do this in certain spiritual practices, particularly the Retrospection exercise.

An important part of your awakening is a growing yearning for something greater in your life, and that is the reality of God. This will be your driving force in the focus of your attention during your continual spiritual growth. On the Path of Christian Mysticism, the Master Jesus Christ is your teacher and guide who leads you into the reality of God within. In certain Eastern schools, the true teacher is the inner Self, or the “atman.”

Soon, you will learn that continual purification is a normal phenomenon of your spiritual growth, so you will learn to adjust, although it will come in spurts now and then while you live in

this mundane world and face its negative influence. Many habits and patterns you once indulged in now leave a sour taste in your mouth, so you will want to part from them more readily now. Instead of being comfortable with these negative elements, you tend to feel their sting now, because you are no longer in balance with them. They feel discordant now, for you are no longer in harmony with them. Instead, you are becoming balanced with the ways of righteousness through Jesus Christ, for he remains your focus.

Purification is cleansing the negative debris from your life so that you will become more receptive to the Light of Christ. As you apply spiritual disciplines, you will begin to bring the reality of this Light into your body and mind, therefore, you will become out of sync with your old ways, and you will notice that you are becoming in sync with new and more refined ways during the unfoldment process. You are becoming more receptive to the Light in your life, and in your body and mind, instead of resisting it.

Receiving the Light of Christ

On this Mystical Path, we urge that you focus on the Christ within, the source of Light, which guides you deeper still. You have and still are allowing the purification process in your being, instead of hindering it or returning to the old habits and ways of thinking, which only block your spiritual growth, and along with this your yearning for God grows stronger. Therefore, you are now entering a place where you will receive more Light, and soon you will receive the Light of Christ into your soul and whole being, for this is the wondrous reality of the Illumination. This process is actually far simpler than you think, for it is the untamed ego that tends to complicate the process, which causes you to believe this mystical way should be very hard. The fact is, it is NOT. When you break down the barriers of limitation and complication and all the other blocks that worldly thinking has created, you will learn that becoming receptive to the Light is very easy, because you are truly surrendering over to the Christ within. When you proceed simply, letting nothing block your way, you will receive the Light of the Christos. People do tend to resist the Light, but resistance is futile. Normally they don't really know what they are resisting, but it is the higher force of Christ within, endeavoring to wake them up. It is necessary to transform this habit of resistance into a pattern of receptivity, which means you learn to let go into the Light. This is the key to spiritual surrender.

As you continue with your new ways of being and thinking, and continue your discipline, hence, maintaining the reality of the Light within you and around you, you will enter true transformation. Unfortunately, some initiates have treated the Illumination like a shiny badge, or like some prestigious new status. Then the glitz and glamour fade after a while, and sometimes they tend to slip back into one or more of their old habits. It is important that you do not dally for too long, but just long enough for you to realize that these old ways are of no benefit. If you are truly diligent about your walk on the Mystical Path, then you will persevere. Often this falling back is only momentary, before you snap out of it and get back on the Path once again. For as you maintain your spiritual disciplines and devotion, and consistently practice meditation, hence,

focusing on the Christ within, letting your yearning for God guide you and carry you through, allowing yourself to surrender into the Divine, your spiritual unfoldment will continue steadily, and inner transformation will likewise continue.

Soon the Light will reveal a deeper reality of your inner Self, which you will behold, and in this phase of transformation is that place where the temple veil has been rent and you enter the Holy of Holies, hence, you will witness the glorious God-Self within, which is the Source of your true being, for this is the Initiation of the Rising of the Self. Likewise, you will also begin to hear the voice of your true inner Self, The God-Self.

“And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake and the rocks rent.” Matthew 27:51

According to the Gospels, this occurred when Jesus Christ was crucified and then died, for the renting of the temple veil has been esoterically symbolic of the doors of Initiation being opened for all mankind.

“Christ made the first self-sacrifice, thereby abrogating the sacrifice of animals, and finally at the consummation of his work in the visible world *rent the veil* and opened a way into the Holy of Holies, not only for the favored few, the priests and Levites, but that WHOSOEVER WILL may come and serve the Deity whom we know as our Father.”¹²

In the days of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, the high priest could only enter the Holy of Holies once a year. The outer sanctuary has not been needed anymore, and so devotees can set up their own personal altars and may enter the sanctuary within, and in meditation they can enter the Holy of Holies and face the God-Self within the heart.

The Path of the Atman

In Hinduism and certain schools of Buddhism, the concept of attaining the “atman” is important, but it is usually misunderstood. Atman as the personal self is actually impermanent and illusory. However, atman as the greater and real SELF is permanent and eternal. It has been said that when the disciple enters the atman within, reaching toward Brahman, he soon realizes the two are one, for Brahman is the cosmic soul of the universe. The statement “Atman is Brahman” pertains to that realization of the Self, hence, entering divine unity. You can restate that as “Self is God.” Another way of putting it is that the microcosm and macrocosm have become One, or it is realized that it is already and always has been One. In Hermetic terms, this reflects the principle of “as above, so below.”

When the aspirant reaches Divine Selfhood, the true Atman, this is the rising of the true Self that you truly are. For you are not the personal self, for that is merely a role you are playing in this lifetime. The Sanskrit word “atman” is often translated to meaning divine breath, one’s essence, or one’s soul. In this sense God breathed life into a human being, imparting to it a soul,

within which is the atman, or Divine Self. It is this true Self that travels from lifetime to lifetime in this earthly world. Since people live in the state of Maya in this world, the illusory existence, a realm of impermanence whose nature is absolutely transitory, the continuing drama perpetuates that mankind maintains many selves, which are mere reflections or basically symbolic of the greater Self, of which there is only one. You unfold on the spiritual path while maintaining this personal self, until you realize that is not who you are, for your true nature is the God-Self of Divine Consciousness.

In the state of Maya people tend to believe in separation from God, or even disbelieve God's existence. They become caught up in their lower nature, or ego, or the personal self of atman, and think God is somewhere outside of themselves, if this deity exists at all. Therefore, it seems as if the world revolves around the individual, for he sees outward from a central point of himself, which is an illusion of course. The truth is, it is Divine Consciousness, or the God-Self that is the central point of everything and yet is the entirety of everything.

Let us relay the analogy of an actor who has been portraying a particular character in a TV show, as he fine-tunes this role to perfection until it seems very real, not only to his audience but to himself. He may begin to believe he is that character, forgetting who he really is. This may become a psychological trap, unless he begins to remember. And once he remembers he is merely an actor who had been playing a temporary role, he has awakened to who he truly is. Essentially this is the aspirant walking the spiritual path toward the atman, or Divine Selfhood.

It can be said that all actors are playing roles who eventually realize the One Self is the real player through these countless illusory selves. The image of a wagon wheel with many spokes leading to one central hub may give you an idea of what we are saying.



Incidentally, the eight-spoked wagon wheel is a symbol of Buddhism and the Noble Eightfold Path, which are eight practices: right understanding, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. These can be seen as tools to assist the seeker toward enlightenment. Let us explain here that there is a difference between Enlightenment and Illumination although they are both aspects of the initiatory process. On the Eastern path and specifically Buddhism, enlightenment tends to cover the whole process of the path of unfoldment which culminates in a soul becoming fully enlightened, or reaching liberation, hence, leading to Nirvana. This in itself is quite vague and one must do further study to get a fuller picture. On the Western path, covering many traditions, Illumination is one of the steps of the Initiatory Path, and in simple terms it is awakening to and experiencing the indwelling Light.

It is said that when a student becomes brilliantly luminous and then realizes the true atman within, becoming enlightened, he has reached Buddha Consciousness, or the Buddha in his ultimate state of Nirvana, otherwise called Christ Consciousness, or even Cosmic Consciousness.

The Way of Divine Union

As you become familiar with living in the presence of your true inner being, the God-Self, especially through your continual disciplines and your new way of righteous living, and being an example to others, further transformation continues, and your yearning will always carry you through, and this will guide you to genuine surrender, where you learn to simply let go into the reality of God within. This leads to the next phase, Unity, or as early mystics referred to it as the Unitive Way. This reality of Divine Union is where the aspirant experiences being one with God. You realize that not only are you having experiences of God in your life, but that God is experiencing through you as well. Or you could say while you are having a spiritual experience of God, God is having a physical experience of you. These are simply two perceptions of the same phenomenon. In Divine Union, your own consciousness seems to be expanding and entering the divine Cosmic Consciousness of God. Your own consciousness is simply a tiny bubble of the greater God Consciousness, and once that bubble has burst, there is nothing left but God's Consciousness. That is the goal of this Mystical Path. As you go forth to serve mankind, you are a shining example to others, for there is nothing left of the "old you," because the "real you," the "God you" is now the one expression that is taking place. You function from the place of your God-Self as you go forth to awaken and uplift others, so that they too may receive the Light of the Christos. Of course, your life of service began soon after your awakening process, but your desire and ability to serve and uplift others increases as your own spiritual unfoldment increases.

Once the aspirant has had an experience of Divine Union, and this continues to grow within you, he will become a true Master of Life in this world. He will become a genuine spiritual teacher and leader of others, who guides other aspirants into their own Illumination, Transformation, and Divine Union. This is the Way of the Mystical Path.

Realize this expression of Divine Union operates in waves will; that is, the spiritual adept often functions on the height of the waves when doing the spiritual work, uplifting the consciousness of others, while other times he may be functioning as a normal human being in the lower part of the waves, although he always remembers who he truly is and does not forget that he is one with God.

Spiritual Disciplines

Along the way of spiritual unfoldment, certain disciplines are required. There are many different kinds of disciplines, for there are many different spiritual traditions; however, in this course of study we have focused on certain ones. These practices are geared to encourage and guide you in your spiritual unfoldment. Without them, your journey will be more difficult. It would be like walking along the narrow ledge along a cliff with no protective guide rails, for you will more easily slip and fall without them. These spiritual tools will ensure your steady journey along the Mystical Path:

Prayer
Meditation
Contemplation
Spiritual Exercises

We can add certain practices such as worship of God, service to mankind, study, prayer, fasting, etc. Likewise, you can practice certain virtues of the soul, such as gratitude, patience, humility, compassion, service, kindness, purity, sincerity, detachment, and faith. Later, you will receive a special course on these virtues called **Soul Unfoldment on the Virtuous Path**. By practicing these, you will be replacing negative traits and vices with beneficial spiritual virtues. We hope you look forward to this.

“To know the mechanics does not mean that we are practicing the Disciplines. The Spiritual Disciplines are an inward and spiritual reality, and the inner attitude of the heart is far more crucial than the mechanics for coming into the reality of the spiritual life.”¹³

This is why it is best to not let your outer mind lead the way in such disciplines, but to let it sit back and then let the heart lead you, which is the devotional way, and that is the way of worship and love toward the Creator, the Source of Divine Consciousness, the Divine Self.

Although we have explained a step-by-step progression in these Foundations, they are not actually linear, although you may perceive them as such. Ultimately, they are cyclical, which means you will always be seeing and experiencing aspects of each one throughout your spiritual life, because they are simply aspects of the one process of spiritual unfoldment. This means you will always be going through awakening, deeper and deeper. You will always be purifying on different levels. You will always be experiencing more of the Light, letting it reveal deeper realities to you. You will always be going through transformation. You will always be growing deeper into Divine Union with God via a bond of love, experiencing glimpses at first and then deeper and fuller realities of this as you continue unfolding. The truth is the outer mind likes labels and stages, but there will come a point where you will no longer need the labels and stages as your spiritual unfoldment continues proceeding as it should.

To show this cyclical aspect in an analogy, imagine a springlike spiral that gradually coils upward, and your progress is shown as a line going up one side, and as it touches each curve of the spiral, it has gained a little further going upward.

Once you have applied the four exercises in this particular course of study involving the Foundations of Light, you can begin the next section of the course: **The Ascent into of Light**.

Spiritual Exercise 4

Emotional Cleansing Exercise

This exercise can be done during or right after the Retrospection as specific issues rise to the surface that require immediate attention, or whenever necessary. This exercise is a function of cleansing and healing on an emotional level, which affects the mental and physical levels likewise.

Step 1. Sit comfortably in your chair and relax, beginning with steady breath control. Go within in a meditative state and be open to the Light of Christ.

Step 2. Allow your mind to dwell on certain sensitive emotional issues, whether from immediate circumstances or recurring incidences from the past, no matter how long ago. These could be from earlier years of your life all the way back to your childhood. Most people have unresolved childhood issues or traumatic episodes that need to be examined and healed. This exercise will cover working with these as well as current issues. Realize that these negative elements cannot harm you by simply observing them. In fact, by allowing them to surface you are in the process of releasing them. They are kept in the subconscious region of the mind, and they must be brought up to the conscious level in order to LET THEM GO. The worst thing you can do is attempt to hide from them or suppress them. This is similar to having thorns in your flesh which digs in deeper until the festering wounds incurs infection, causing emotional imbalance that often becomes exacerbated. Hence the harm comes in forcing them to remain unresolved. Resentment, regret, grudges, anger, hatred, despair, unforgiveness, worry, etc., are some of these thorns and they must be pulled out, or rather, rectified and healed in you. Quite often these issues involve other individuals you have dealt with. Therefore, you must come to forgive each person involved in order to release them from you, so you can be free. Jesus said, "Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do." If they did know, if they realized the consequences of their actions, then they would not have committed them in the first place. What they put out will come back to them. Also, if you were in the wrong in a situation, then you must ask God for forgiveness, and likely forgive yourself. If you can go to the person and ask him for forgiveness, then do so. Admitting you were wrong will not only help you but it will help him too. A resolution between the two has occurred and a healing has taken place. Incidentally, you will find such principles in the 12-Step Program of Alcoholics Anonymous for those who struggle with alcoholism, and Al-Anon for individuals who struggle with alcoholic loved ones.

Step 3. Take one emotional issue at a time, not all of them at once. You can write them down in your notebook if you wish, referring to them when you do this exercise. Focus on one

issue per sitting; however, if another issue arises afterward, deal with it also. Reflect on a specific event or confrontation that occurred, see what images come up, and get into the feeling of it, feeling the negative emotion from the event no matter how painful or intense it is, for you are drawing it up to the surface it so you can face it head-on, to cast it out entirely.

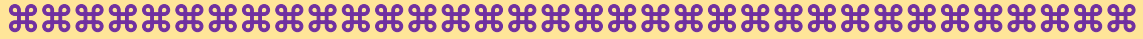
Step 4. Now as you feel its intensity, you can rate it on a scale of 1 to 10. You can say that 1 is at its mildest and 10 is the most intense. At the end of the session, the negative feeling should be gone entirely, so you can say this is 0. Then you begin feeling peace or joy. This rating system merely helps your conscious mind by giving it a tangible framework to measure these issues by.

Step 5. Now relax and be open to the movement of the Spirit within you, which emanates the Light. Do this while you take slow, deep breaths to help your body and mind relax and become calm. Feel the Spirit within, feel the Spirit's Light bathing you as you absorb it completely like a sponge absorbs water. This is the Light of Christ that surrounds and fills you; therefore, while you do this, pray to God within to take the negative feeling or emotion and to dissolve it completely, to cast it into the fire of the Light to burn it up. If you have a candle before you, or on your altar, you can imagine pulling out this thorn in your flesh and flinging it into the light of the candle, representing that you are casting it into the fire of the Christ Light to burn it up. Sometimes you feel the tension in your abdomen as your muscles knot up, so you can grasp the negative energy here in your hand and cast it into the fire. We are suggesting methods of living symbolism, but in essence you are letting God take it from you. If you need to ask for forgiveness or to forgive another at this point in this issue at hand, then do so now.

Step 6. Once you have completed this phase, let the movement of the Spirit flow through you again, and you should feel much calmer and more at peace now. You might even feel rejoicing. Then fearlessly return to the original issue you have examined, and rate the feeling or emotion of it once again. It should have subsided significantly, as it should be much lower on the rating scale now. If it was an 8, 9, or 10, it may now be a 4, 3, 2 or 1. You may not feel it at all, but in its place you may feel the peace and joy or love emanating from God within. You have become detached from the emotion in question finally, to where it bothers you no longer. It becomes a distant memory. It does not tie you down anymore. It is important that any negative feeling must be replaced with a positive one. You know you have been successful if you first felt anger or worry, or whatever the emotion was, and you now feel peace.

However, if this issue or the others try to rear their ugly heads again, use this method again, and in a particularly severe case, do it repeatedly until the negative emotion and the painful memory no longer have power over you. Realize the real power comes from the God-Self. God is more powerful than anything or anybody. Remember this.

Step 7. In prayer, thank God for helping and healing you. Then you are finished with this session. If it is the end of the day, you may retire for the night and you should be able to sleep peacefully now.



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