

## **LESSON I - FUNDAMENTALS OF DIVINE SCIENCE**

### **THE SEARCH FOR IDENTITY**

Your decision to take this basic course in Divine Science shows that you are interested in your mental and spiritual growth. You are aware that you are a living soul on the path of spiritual unfoldment and awakening. This deep desire for awareness of THAT WHICH IS, is the foundation of all spiritual progress.

Who am I? Why am I here in this universe of form and substance? Who made me? What is my goal? The way that you answer these questions is your personal religion, whether you call it that or not. The search for answers to these questions has led people upward and onward from prehistoric days until the present. A person's religion changes and keeps pace with his or her individual unfoldment.

### **THE VALUE OF RELIGION**

Religion is not a fixed set of doctrines and rules. It is a way of life, in which each one acts out his or her personal answer to humanity's eternal questions. Meaningful religion has been our greatest help throughout the ages for a variety of reasons:

- It gives us an understanding of the values in life; it is the unveiling of the Truth of and to ourselves.
- It gives us the strength, courage, and wisdom to meet the problems and challenges of everyday life.
- It gives us the dependable anchor to hold us steady amid sudden and confusing changes in our outer world.
- It meets our greatest need, namely, to love and worship our Creator.

### **THE GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD**

People have interpreted and described this inner urge for spiritual unfoldment and union in light of their individual understanding at various stages of growth. This has brought forth a multitude of religions and philosophies throughout human history. These many paths, though they seem to meander and detour at times, eventually lead to the mountaintop of God Consciousness. We never condemn any sincere religion, though it may appear very different from ours.

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### **ONE TRUTH, MANY APPROACHES**

Great philosophers and scientists have also brought degrees of illumination to humanity, for there is only one Truth. Among Greek philosophers who contributed to world thought are Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Among the famous sages of Indic origin are Shankara, Gautama the Buddha, Nanak, and the most recent Ramakrishna. From China came Lao Tzu and Confucius. From the Holy Land has come a long procession of great seers and prophets, culminating in the one who is, to us, the highest of all: Jesus the Christ.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the apostles and post-apostolic leaders who kept the teachings of Jesus alive for us. Through the Middle Ages, mystics such as John Scotus Erigena, Meister Eckhart, and Julian of Norwich have maintained the vision of God's Omnipresence. The Protestant Reformation produced leaders of great stature, including John Huss, Martin Luther, and George Fox, who brought about a renewal of Christian liberty and spirituality.

### **MODERN RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS**

During the past few generations, we have been witnessing a rebirth of spiritual consciousness. The closing decades of the 1800s saw the beginning of such movements as Christian Science, Vedanta, Unity, and Divine Science, which have pioneered new frontiers of understanding. The progress of nuclear physics, holography, and quantum mechanics have added data which parallels metaphysical teachings in a variety of ways. Divine Science, specifically, founded by Malinda E. Cramer in 1888, with its universal outlook and its all-embracing principle of Omnipresence, stands at the apex of these movements.

### **DIVINE SCIENCE—ITS PRINCIPLE AND FAITH**

Divine Science stands for:

- The Fatherhood/Motherhood of God and the oneness of humanity.
- The incarnation of the Spirit of God in and as every individual.
- The spiritual source of all substance.
- The Unity of Being and of Life and all its phases.
- The immortality of the individual soul.
- The transcendence and immanence of God as manifest in all created things, yet above and beyond all created things: God the Visible and the Invisible, the Absolute and the Relative, the Universal and the Individual.
- The power of right thinking to release our divine inheritance into visible expression.

Divine Science teaches:

- How to rise above fear, anxiety, and worry.
- How to live in complete harmony with other people and with your environment.
- How to heal discord of all kinds, both mental and physical.
- How to manifest abundant supply for all daily needs.
- How to find your own place and work in life.

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- How to contact Divine Wisdom in all your thinking.
- How to come into conscious union with God.

### THE WAY OF ATTAINMENT

Religion, at its best, has always spoken to the need for conscious union with our Divine Creator. Many have referred to the joy resulting from such a conscious union. Many have also told of the wonders of redemption and healing which follow. Few, however, have set forth a definite technique, a practical method whereby one can come into real awareness of the Presence of God, step by step. Seldom have they shown the individual how to talk to God, how to listen when God speaks, or how to reach the level of thinking and living that leads to rebirth into a new plane of consciousness. Divine Science has developed such a technique, which it gladly shares with all who come seeking the light.

These lessons will teach you how to put this technique into practice. We urge you to set aside at least one hour each day for regular study and meditation. Your success depends upon your enthusiasm and faithful practice.

You may already be somewhat aware of affirmations and how to use them. In Divine Science we use affirmations to remind ourselves repeatedly of eternal truths. This leads to an inner quickening in which we gain confidence and trust in the truths to which the affirmations point. In a later lesson we will fully explain affirmations both in principle and in practice.

We urge you to use the affirmation given in each lesson as a basis for your meditation at the close of your study period. Also, use these affirmations as often during the day as possible. Repetition is one of the surest ways of impressing a statement upon your subconscious phase of mind. A basic goal of spiritual education is this: to synchronize the conscious and subconscious levels of mind so that they function together under the guidance of the Indwelling Christ.

Those whose schedules permit will often find mornings the best time for study and prayer, with a short period of evening meditation. It is helpful to choose a time when you are least likely to be interrupted. We urge you to take enough time to put into daily practice whatever aspect of truth is being emphasized.

MAY THE PEACE OF THE INDWELLING CHRIST ABIDE WITH YOU.

***Read this lesson thoroughly. Then read the Forward and Chapter One in Divine Science: Its Principle and Practice***

**Affirmation:** I AM LED BY THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH INTO ALL TRUTH.

**Bible Quotation:** “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” (John 8:31-32)

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### **Questions:**

1. If the Divine Spirit is always standing at the door of our minds, why do so few people know it?
2. How was Jesus able, at all times, to express this Indwelling spirit in word and deed?
3. Did Jesus limit this power to individual persons, places or times?
4. Who is it that has been constantly postponing peace on earth?
5. Were Jesus' teachings considered radical and unusual by some of the churches of his time?
6. Why is it sometimes easier for "the common people" to accept truth?
7. What is the Divine Science attitude toward other religions?