

Chapter 5

How To Be Spiritual

BEFORE any attempt is made to give instructions on how to be spiritual we must first have a clear cut idea of what is meant by that term. Before we can intelligently discuss how to get something, we must first know what it is that we are trying to get. Yet the idea of spirituality commonly held is anything but clear cut and well defined.

To be sure, the word "spiritual" is to be heard on every lip in all those circles which converse so fluently about the aspirations of the human heart. Yet I can recall no word that conveys so many divergent meanings, or about which, in the minds of those who speak of it most frequently, there is such utter confusion. It seems to be taken for granted, by those who write and talk so assuredly about it, that there is nothing of higher import to man; yet, when pinned down to any clear statement, opinions differ as widely as the poles, or at least as widely as West is from East; for the Oriental conception of spirituality varies from the Occidental conception no less than the dreamy, passive temperament of the peoples of such languid climes is opposed by the aggressive, red-blooded enterprise of a temperamentally vigorous and virile race.

There is prevalent today an Oriental notion of spirituality that arises from the view that life is an intolerable condition to be endured only because it is forced upon the individual and cannot be avoided, and that whatever effort must be expended may best be devoted to those acts which will enable the individual to escape from the wheel of karma and rebirth into the negation of nirvana. But entwined with these purely Oriental notions are numerous inheritances from Christianity, long since outgrown in their actual practice, but which theoretically are expounded as spiritual virtues.

No one is so impractical, for instance, as to insist that a gangster shall take still other of his belongings when the gangster, either by force of arms or by law, takes part of them; although we are still taught from the pulpit it is a virtue to give a man one's cloak if by law he takes away one's coat. Nor when smitten do we turn the other cheek; for if we did we should suffer the fate of those adjoining nations that offered no resistance to Hitler, or the same fatality that overtook the one who gave this precept. Most of us recognize that the doctrine of meekness leads to slavery, and that instead of mourning being a blessing, it is psychologically a crime. Yet these and a dozen other notions, including the idea that Deity is pained to see man enjoy himself, and that the saintly life is lived only by those who make themselves unusually miserable,

are vaguely blended with Oriental views on the desirability of escaping life, and together comprise what passes among many for spirituality.

The Oriental views I have discussed in some detail in Chapters 7 & 8, Course 2, *Astrological Signatures*. Here, therefore, I shall not consume space by discussing such ideas. Nor are they here mentioned in a carping, fault-finding spirit; but only because no clear conception of real spirituality can be presented without at least thus briefly sweeping away the rubbish and debris with which the centuries have covered it; and because, further, it is only fair to make plain at the start of this discourse that there is a distinctly Western conception of spirituality which is quite dissimilar to either that of the Orient or that of orthodox Christianity.

This dissimilarity is most pronounced. For instance, the Western cosmic alchemist places very little emphasis on what people are not to do, and instead of the many prohibitions of the Orient, and the thou shalt nots of Christianity, he constantly insists that something should be done, and points out specifically what that something is.

Instead of a vocabulary of Sanskrit words that to most Western students may mean nothing or anything; instead of the Latin and psychological pagentry employed by the Roman Catholics to impress their devotees with the holiness of their leaders; and instead of the ambiguous and contradictory passages that Protestants make mean anything they wish, and thus are able to present a Scriptural quotation to prove whatever they may desire; the Western School uses as plain language as possible, carefully defines such technical terms as must be employed, and if any feeling of mystery lingers in the student's mind, deems that its work has been ineffectually presented.

Then again, a certain mood of fatality and inevitability is engendered by the Eastern doctrines; and while predestination is not so vigorously debated in the Church as it once was, the conception still prevails in Christian circles that instead of being dependent upon initiative, intelligence and effort, man is largely dependent upon the grace and mercy of a Divine Being who can be wheedled into granting special and quite unmerited favors.

But the cosmic alchemist perceives that all nature is under law, and not subject to the whims and caprices of either Jehovah or His Son. That there are intelligences higher than man he has good reason to believe. Nor does he scoff at prayers, but considers that they also operate under laws; and these laws he strives to understand. He believes, furthermore, that there is an all-pervading Deific Intelligence Whom he calls God. But above all, he emphasizes the importance, not of permitting things to happen because apparently they are foreordained, but of applying initiative and intelligence towards making those things happen which he deems to be in the direction of individual betterment and human and universal progress. He considers man not merely as an inert and passive creature, but as a dynamic force capable of uniting himself to Deity for the purpose of accomplishing a useful and progressive work in the constantly expanding domain of universal development.

Spiritual Values

Now either spirituality is real, and has come meaning to life, or it is a vague nothingness. If it has a value to life, it must contribute either to quantity or to quality; that is, to length of life or to its richness, because aside from these two there can be no value.

Orientalists imply, with their doctrine of repeated human births on earth, that the region where the human soul can effectively express itself is more restricted and narrow, while Western cosmic alchemists find innumerable

realms in space in which, by means of finer vehicles, mankind can work and develop and continue a vividly self-conscious and progressive existence. But if life has a value, both its duration and what is thought, felt and done in its duration are significant.

We never hear the term spirituality applied to mere duration of life. At least the duration of physical life cannot be used as a measure of spirituality. For although a Sequoia tree may gain experiences that contribute quality during its existence, it is probable that its spirituality is much less than that of many men who live less than one-fortieth of the time it thrives on earth. Yet duration of life, because it affords the opportunity to develop the soul, and affords man the opportunity to gain spiritual treasures, has a very real value.

Mere duration of life is not spirituality, as spirituality depends upon how the duration is utilized. The opportunity is not the treasure; but has a value in that it makes it possible to obtain the treasure. Yet aside from this duration, which has spiritual value only as an opportunity, there is left of life only one thing of value, and that is the quality of life. Consequently, true spirituality must in some manner relate to the quality of the thoughts, feelings and actions of life.

Experiences add states of consciousness to the soul, and these through increasing the knowledge give a certain quality to the life. Yet many thoughts, feelings and actions while affecting the quality of the life do not increase its spirituality. Spirituality is not intelligence, it is not merely activity, nor is it merely knowledge, nor all of these three. It is not the quality of life resulting from its complexity, but the quality of life that, irrespective of its complexity, tends to lift it to a higher level.

Even as physical objects have two other dimensions than that of length, so has life two distinct and different measurements of quality. Of course, considered from the standpoint of the movements of a physical, and therefore three-dimensional, entity, time is the fourth dimension. But when we measure states of consciousness we must consider life from another view. And as we are familiar with three dimensions, all at right angles to each other, for the sake of simplicity of illustration let us also consider life as having three dimensions, all at right angles to each other and thus to be measured much as we measure the volume of some physical object.

From this analogical viewpoint we may as well consider time as most people do, as the measure of the length of life. As the breadth of anything is measured at right angles to its length, from this view point it would seem that the breadth of life would be measured by the number, variety and intensity of its experiences. Thus in one of its dimensions a life is rich in proportion to the amount of thought, feeling and action packed into it.

Yet however active a man may be, however varied his experiences, however much he has felt, and however much knowledge he has acquired, from these and the length of his life its value cannot be completely measured. To appraise its worth, in addition to these two measurements at right angles to each other there is needed another measurement at right angles to both of these, even as to measure physical volume the thickness of that which is to be measured must be ascertained as well as the length and breadth. This dimension of thickness, when applied to man's life, relates to the refinement, or vibratory level, of the thoughts, feelings and actions. It is the distance these are above those of the brutes. It is the lowness or the height of this vibratory level that affords, regardless of the length of the life or its richness in breadth, the true measure of its spirituality.

In the Chapter 1, Course 20, *The Next Life*, it is explained that there are innumerable levels of the inner-plane world, on each of which life exists. Each level has its own basic vibratory rate. And it is there pointed out that everything has a dominant vibratory rate, and that on the inner-plane the principle of resonance supersedes the law of gravitation. Not only after physical dissolution, but in so far as the astral form and soul are concerned while they are still in the flesh, people gravitate to the inner-plane level the basic vibratory rate of which most nearly is that of their own dominant vibratory rate. This attraction is as inevitable, and as powerful, as is the force of gravitation to hold their physical bodies to the earth.

Thus from the inner-plane effect we have a quite clear criterion of that which tends in the direction of spirituality. Any thought or experience which tends to raise the individual's dominant vibratory rate tends to increase his spirituality, and any thought or experience which tends to lower his dominant vibratory rate decreases his spirituality. This dominant vibratory rate is little influenced by knowledge as such. But it is powerfully influenced by the emotions.

Knowledge when used for selfish ends, to enslave others, and to find means to enable the individual to be more brutal, detracts from spirituality. The lowest astral levels are inhabited by those who while on earth had keen intellects and had acquired much knowledge, but who so decreased their dominant vibratory rate by using that knowledge to cause others misery that they have gravitated to the very slums of the inner world. Either length or life or breadth of life is valuable in that it affords opportunity to increase the spirituality, but unless thus utilized it has no power to add to the life in this direction.

In general, because commonly they are accompanied by emotions that possess a very high vibration and constructive potency on the inner-plane, we may broadly classify all those thoughts, feelings and actions that spring from a desire to help others, rather than to gain some profit for themselves, as spiritual. Such constructive efforts and the emotional states accompanying them generate some of the highest vibratory rates known to human life, and consequently are very potent sources of true spirituality.

People add most to their spirituality who live by the universal moral code—which is explained in detail in Chapter 6, Course 19, *Organic Alchemy*—stated thus: A SOUL IS COMPLETELY MORAL WHEN IT IS CONTRIBUTING ITS UTMOST TO COSMIC WELFARE. This implies that all, instead of just a few, of the thoughts, feelings and actions are motivated by the desire to benefit others, and that to be able to render greater service the individual, among other things, strives to gain more knowledge and to advance spiritually. In thus seeking to become a more valuable workman in the universal scheme, when he develops far enough he will become a spiritual alchemist. He will then seek out such experiences as he needs, and taking the proper attitude towards each and every event of his life, as explained in Course 3, *Spiritual Alchemy*, he will insure its final spiritual transmutation.

But in addition to these two methods: (1) viewing events from the standpoint of spiritual alchemy, and (2) cultivating thoughts, feelings and actions that arise from the desire to benefit others, there is a third effective way to raise the dominant vibratory rate and thus to increase the spirituality. (3) As distinct from grosser experiences, a heightened intellectual and emotional appreciation may be cultivated that raises the vibratory rates and adds to the height of human experience.

Intellectual processes, however wide their scope, while adding to the

richness of breadth to the life, in themselves cannot contribute to spirituality. If the aim associated with these mental processes has been to gain a selfish advantage over a fellowman, the coarse vibratory rate of the ulterior motive lowers the spirituality. If a man remains brutish in his desire, no amount of intellectual attainment will confer upon him spirituality. His widened mental functions will merely enable the brute to be more successful in his brutishness.

But if in scanning the universe and solving many of the problems of its laws he has a feeling of uplift, an exaltation at the majesty of nature and an admiration for its laws, he has added to his spiritual stature. Or if associated with mental attainment or the exercise of any ability is the desire to render service to humanity, the spirituality is increased. When activity of the intellect brings aspiration, or when finer emotions not centered in self arise from it, there is distinct spiritual gain. Real education, therefore, is one avenue to true spirituality.

Literature, music, art, the drama, the movies, nature and social intercourse all may, under certain conditions, engender gross and selfish impulses that detract from spirituality. But each one of these, as well as education, prayer and devotional exercises, through stimulating refined emotions, noble impulses and high aspirations may contribute to the vibratory height of individual existence, and therefore to spirituality. The remaining lessons of this course, consequently, will be devoted to explaining how these elements of culture may be approached and used as stepping stones to spiritual attainment.

I trust, now that the cosmic alchemist's conception of spirituality has been made plain, that we can turn with some confidence to an examination of current, and I believe, erroneous notions of spirituality. And in this, in spite of it being poor taste to mention personal matters, as concrete examples are better than abstract dissertations to make a viewpoint clear, I shall discuss the attitude The Church of Light has taken when confronted with real situations.

Many years ago we issued a folder to interest people in occult and spiritual matters. It was entitled, "What Do You Want?" A certain occult magazine solicited our advertisement and we sent it copy of an advertisement of this folder appearing in various other magazines. This advertisement asserted that occultism will assist you to get what you want. Thus, astrology, to our certain knowledge, has helped innumerable people to get what they wanted. Psychology and mental alchemy also are known to have helped many get what they wanted. But the editor of this magazine held that occultism should not be used to get what one wants, and refused to carry the advertisement on this grounds. He, of course, was well within his right, and we admired his determination to keep his magazine up to certain spiritual standards. But because his viewpoint is a prevalent one, it is worthy of careful examination.

The very first thing real occultism teaches is that man should not want something at the expense of his fellowman. And the next instruction of true occultism is to show the individual just what he should want. Then, after indicating what man should not want, and what he should want—that he should want only those things which are beneficial to society as well as to himself—it points out the most certain road to the realization of these worthy wants.

I am unable to discern that it is more wicked, or more unspiritual, to injure another, or to deprive him of what justly is his, by occult processes than

Erroneous Notions of Spirituality

it is to injure him or take property from him with a gun, or through a superior knowledge of values to deprive him to the same extent in some shrewd business deal that is well within the law.

But because I have had the advantage, over more than forty years, to observe closely those who take up occult study and practice, I unhesitatingly say that I consider it far more dangerous to use occult means to deprive another unjustly or to injure him, than it is to use a gun or questionable business methods. Even in reading birth-charts one tends to tune in on unseen forces, and in using magic or psychology to influence another one contacts invisible entities. And so far as such forces are used a link is established with them. Under the law of resonance, that like attracts like, the grade and quality of invisible intelligences are attracted that correspond to the motives, desires and mental state held. One contacts the entities of the inner-plane basic vibratory level which corresponds to the dominant vibratory rate at the time. If, therefore, one is intent on taking advantage of another, intelligences are attracted that have no scruples about taking such advantage. But these same intelligences, as explained in detail in Chapter 3, Course 18, *Imponderable Forces*, because essentially unscrupulous, do not hesitate to take advantage of the one using them. Usually sooner, but surely later, according to my observations of real life, those who use occultism to the disadvantage of their fellowman are themselves victims either of the projected forces which have completed their orbits, or meet disaster through the misguidance of invisible intelligences.

Unhesitatingly, therefore, I can offer this advice to anyone who contemplates dishonesty: To follow the common criminal channels is far less hazardous, and is far more likely to escape severe penalty, than to use occult means as a means to such ends.

Yet to the individual who has no dishonest intention, but who accepts the cardinal doctrine of occultism that we should develop our highest efficiency the better to serve our fellowman, occultism offers both a safe and a most effective means. Nor, Oriental doctrines to the contrary, is there anything unspiritual in wanting or possessing material conveniences, so long as in their acquisition others are not made to suffer.

As explained in chapter 2, material objects, as well as various experiences, give us the ingredients through which we increase the range of both intelligence and emotion, and therefore within proper limits they may be used as aids to spiritual progress. Furthermore, because a knowledge of occult laws is the most effectual way to attain what we want, and enables us to accomplish for ourselves and for society what otherwise we could not, it becomes a duty to the cosmic alchemist to become familiar with these laws, and to make use of them for his own unfoldment, and for the alleviation of the suffering by which he is surrounded.

It is true that those who try to use elementals usually end by becoming their slaves, and that those who use modern gangsters for their ends also usually end by becoming victims of the underworld. But anyone with a real knowledge of occultism will not employ ceremonial magic and elementals, no more than an intelligent citizen will employ machine guns and gangsters to get what he wants. There is a wrong way to try to accomplish anything; but because this is true does not imply that all methods are wrong.

If we conclude that because a force is invisible it is wrong to use it, we must discard the electric motor and radar, and take the telephone, radio and electric lights from our homes. By astrology, which is one of the three great

divisions of occultism, it can be determined what we can and what we cannot accomplish at a given time. To commence something that is sure to be a failure is a waste to society and is anything but spiritual. To attempt something that can be accomplished, and that in some manner will make the lives of others happier and richer, agrees well with our definition of spirituality. Yet the use of astrological knowledge certainly is the use of occultism, and in this case it is used to get what is wanted.

After all, reason is an occult process; for we can not see it work. If it is unspiritual to employ occultism to get what we want, it is also unspiritual to employ reason for the same end. Is it, then, spiritual to go blundering through life making mistakes that cause ourselves and others endless suffering, and unspiritual to use either intelligence or the definite roadmap of our possibilities that astrology affords?

Some years ago, here in Los Angeles, I was invited to speak before a gathering of metaphysicians. I gave them, as best I could in so brief a time, my ideas on astrology. At the close of my talk a man, who at that time had a very large following as a metaphysical healer, arose and said that no true metaphysician would pay any attention to astrology. He held that any knowledge worth while must come from within, and that the stars, or anything other than man's mind, could have no influence over him.

This same metaphysician a few months later went to a then developing suburb of Los Angeles and commenced to promote the settling of a tract of land. Within two years from the time he publicly proclaimed that all information worth anything must come from within, he had lost not only all his own money, but the money of many of his friends, in the inadvised real estate project. This man who was a brilliant speaker, and who was not dishonest, caused himself and his friends great loss by entering upon investments at a time when the progressed aspects in his chart made it impossible for him to have success in this kind of a venture, even with the help of metaphysical treatments. I have no doubt most of his audience, when he spoke of astrology, became convinced of its uselessness. Yet any astrological student capable of working progressed aspects could have told him, before he entered upon it, that his real estate venture was doomed to certain failure.

Then also, there come to our class-room from time to time, those who proclaim loudly that they do not read books, that they have no need of getting any information from others, because, after all, whatever they need to know is revealed to them from within. Nevertheless, I observe these people, like the metaphysical orator just mentioned, blundering through life and causing themselves and others hardships because their egos are so inflated that they will not condescend to check their views against the experiences of others as recorded in books or as expressed in conversation. This is their idea of being spiritual.

But The Church of Light idea is that those who consult and use whatever means they can find to make their lives successful, who thus make fewer painful blunders, and who consequently contribute more to human welfare, even if some of their knowledge does not come from within, are more spiritual. True occultism shows you where you can be of greatest service in the cosmic scheme, shows you what you really want, and aids you to get it.

Every organization has the right to impose its own restrictions, and as will be explained shortly, The Church of Light does not permit its ordained teachers or ordained ministers to charge a price for teaching Church of Light classes or

**Charging for
Occult Services**

conducting Church of Light services. But when, as we are so often informed by students of other organizations, it is held that to make any charge for astrological work is in violation of spiritual law, we must strenuously object.

Division of labor in human society makes it inconvenient for each individual to perform all the services he requires. In fact, it is quite impossible. It has become the custom, therefore, for those who use the time and energy of another in securing some service that they are unable or unwilling to do, to give that person something in way of recompense. To become really efficient in performing some service usually requires arduous training, and to maintain that efficiency the person often must continue to devote much time and energy to it. Were he to receive no compensation for his efforts, his efficiency would become lower, as he would be compelled to spend more of his time in some field that would yield a living. Specialization, which makes services most valuable, therefore is commonly maintained by rewarding the specialist with money for services performed.

If one kind of service from which an individual benefits deserves financial reward, any other kind of service that benefits an individual deserves its pay. If you pay the farmer for the products he raises, you should also pay the healer for the use of his time and knowledge. If the community believes it is being benefited by the sermons of an orthodox preacher, or by the discourses of an occult lecturer, there is nothing unspiritual about it if the preacher or lecturer demands pay for the time and energy he uses. Whatever his vocation, he must live to continue it; and if others receive that which is valuable to them from his efforts it is but fair that he should receive something from their efforts that is of value to him.

We frequently hear the platitude that truth can not be purchased for a price. This is true as far as it goes; for truth implies inner comprehension, which depends, not merely upon availability of information, but also upon ability and effort. Yet the other side of this platitude is that many never have the opportunity to grasp truth except as certain facts are presented to them from the printed page, or from the lips of some teacher. Even learning to read and write commonly calls for the assistance of another. And to present the necessary information that assists another to grasp truth, the printer's bills must be paid and the teacher must have food, shelter and clothing.

We are forced to conclude, then, that any service rendered which is beneficial to mankind, if approached with the sincere desire to be helpful rather than solely actuated by desire for personal gain, is a spiritual service. That is, the growing of potatoes, the milking of a cow, the healing of the sick, and the teaching of children, as well as instructing people in the occult sciences, if approached with a desire to assist universal welfare, engenders those emotions in the performer of these services that may be considered spiritual. And because he must receive recompense for his labors if he is to continue performing them, it is not unspiritual to receive money for any service—providing groceries, giving psychic readings, doing astrological work, or piloting an airplane—by which society is really benefited.

The converse of this is that to exploit and take an undue recompense for any service—whether it be a speculation in Wall Street, the use of psychological forces, or the shrewd cornering of some natural resource—is unspiritual, as are all acts motivated by disregard of the welfare of others, and those that injure rather than benefit society.

Those who teach the occult sciences, who talk of things spiritual, who do astrological work, who do stellar healing, and those who use their psychic

faculties for the benefit of others, are quite as justified in making a charge for their work as are those who perform menial labor. If one kind of work is immune from reward, provided it is valuable, then all kinds of valuable work should be immune from reward. Take notice, however, that The Church of Light gives no astrological, psychic or other kinds of readings. Our function is to teach and preach The Religion of the Stars, not to give readings.

Yet even in the performance of these functions, in the interests of spirituality, we have the rule that no one is permitted to charge a price for teaching or conducting services under the auspices of The Church of Light. All such activities are supported by voluntary contributions. This restriction is imposed not because taking money for teaching Brotherhood of Light lessons would be unspiritual, but for two other purposes.

First: There has been a custom for occult lecturers to go about the country, give a few free lectures to lead their prospects on with glowing promises, and then charge from \$10.00 to \$50.00, and even \$100.00, for a course of lessons in some subject. Many of these lecturers have no real knowledge, and have exploited people and given nothing of value for the money they received. A few have given instructions that were well worth the price to those with money enough to take such expensive courses. But those who most needed the courses, and were best qualified to profit by them, all too often were prevented from taking the studies because of their high cost; and others who had the price, but who never made good students, thus largely made up the lecture class.

Teachers of The Church of Light may charge what they like in giving private instructions, or in classes not held under Church of Light auspices. But The Church of Light feels it is desirable that classes and services on the Religion of the Stars shall be maintained in every community where anyone, whether he is rich or poor, may attend and receive instructions. The rule that no charge shall be made for admittance to Church of Light activities enables those who are low in finances to have access to our teachings.

Second: Spirituality demands that there shall be some exercise of unselfish effort. Those joining The Church of Light sign a contract that they will devote some time and energy to the assistance of others without thought of recompense. Where the thoughts are centered solely upon personal advantages to be gained, there is no spirituality. We feel, therefore as expounders of this doctrine of a spiritual life that our teachers should by example, as well as by precept, demonstrate it in their lives. By devoting time and energy to teaching others, without receiving pay for it, even though to receive pay would not be unspiritual, they reveal that their interest in a spiritual life is something more than empty words.

When I assert that the taking of money for the exercise of the psychic faculties is no more unspiritual than taking money for any other service rendered another, I do not imply that such exercise of the psychic faculties is no more dangerous to the spiritual nature than the rendering of commonplace physical services. On the contrary, one who exercises his psychic faculties for the benefit of others is beset by special perils. He contacts the forces and denizens of the inner-plane much more intimately than do others; and to give successful readings or demonstrations he usually becomes quite sensitive to their influence.

If—and I am not here talking about irresponsible mediumship, but about the use of Intellectual ESP—he resolutely keeps his thoughts and aspirations to a high plane, he will contact only forces and entities of high quality and

sterling integrity. But if he allows himself to entertain greedy, licentious, or grossly animal thoughts, he attracts to himself, and cannot fail to be influenced to some extent by, forces and entities of the inner-plane of a similar quality. In giving a psychic reading Intellectual ESP alone is seldom employed, and the psychic commonly comes into close rapport with the person for whom reading. He usually thus temporarily takes on the quality, to some extent, of the person for whom reading; and if this person has low, unworthy, dishonest, or unspiritual thoughts of any kind, the psychic not infrequently, for the time being, acquires these qualities and thus attracts from the invisible, entities and forces that are low, unscrupulous, or otherwise degrading.

Through thus giving readings to all kinds of people, and contacting invisible energies corresponding to their desires, the psychic reader may find that the forces thus attracted have enough influence gradually to undermine his character and cause his thoughts and feelings to deteriorate in quality. The psychic may be able to protect himself from such deterioration, but, at least, there is such danger to one who makes his living giving psychic readings. His calling, therefore, is more perilous than some others; but so long as he has the desire to render honest service, and is able to do so, his calling is in no way unspiritual.

Yet we find occasionally those who heal others through their psychic powers, as well as those who give readings and otherwise exercise their psychic faculties for a money reward, entering their profession with high aspirations and dominated by ideals of real service, only to deteriorate in character and in quality of service rendered by becoming too greatly engrossed in the financial rewards. I have witnessed more than one psychic who did excellent work at start become absorbed in acquiring the dollar, and then swiftly deteriorate in the quality of the service rendered.

Money, at start, was only a secondary consideration. They worked to heal the sick, or to help people through sound advice. But gradually money grew to be the dominant desire, and as it did so the higher, inner energies that made for their previous success could no longer be contacted. Their greed and inconsideration of others made an effectual barrier that cut them off from the vibratory influences that previously had been the source of their power. The accepting of money for their services was not unspiritual; but becoming dominated by the money motive instead of by a sincere desire to be helpful was decidedly lacking in spirituality.

How People Are Bewildered

The plain common sense of people would indicate to them just what things are, and what things are not, spiritual were it not for the bewilderment from which they suffer due to Oriental superstition and Christian dogmas.

In the application of suggestion, and in hypnosis, the subject must first be placed in a certain frame of mind before the suggestions will be accepted as facts, irrespective of their verity, and acted upon. But if this state of mind can be induced, the subject will believe a stick is a snake, that black is white, and that two plus two equals five, and will act upon these beliefs without question, because his critical faculties have been inhibited.

For inducing the hypnotic state it has been common for the subject to gaze steadily at a bright object while the operator drones some phrase over and over. The dazzling object concentrates the attention and bewilders the mind to a state in which the critical faculties are quiescent. When the critical faculties become so confused that they no longer stand guard, the subject is in a state where the monotonous phrase dominates him, and in this state he can be led to accept any other suggestion the operator offers.

Furthermore, it has been found that suggestion can be applied with quite as much force, and that it will be accepted quite as fully, without inducing the hypnotic sleep, but by inducing a state in which the critical faculties, nevertheless, are off guard. Such methods are applied in certain clinics to make the patient insensible to pain during a surgical operation; and they were once given great popularity by Coué in his system of applying auto-suggestion. In fact, Coué found that there is a state which is not total wakefulness, and is not sleep, but somewhere on the border line between the two, in which a suggestion takes hold with tremendous force and quickly becomes a dominant influence over the individual. His cures were all effected through the use of this principle.

Coué induced this state of susceptibility to suggestion by having the patient repeat to himself his well known suggestion, "Every Day, In Every Way, I Am Getting Better And Better." The monotony of repetition tends to still the critical faculties. Also, if the suggestion is repeated just before going to sleep there is a point just between the two states in which the critical faculties are so thoroughly off guard that the suggestion takes hold with tremendous force.

But any thoroughly bewildered state of mind—whether induced by looking at a bright object, by hearing some phrase repeated monotonously again and again, by being on the boundary between wakefulness and real sleep, by hearing a monotonous and pointless sermon, by witnessing monotonous and apparently meaningless rituals, or by receiving a medley of ideas that have no clearly defined meaning—lulls the critical faculties of the human mind to that peculiar state where the individual may be made to accept any idea, however fantastic and lacking in plausibility, and hold to it with all the tenacity of a hypnotized subject.

Give an earnest student a mass of theories that may be twisted so as to signify this, that or anything just as occasion requires, and which really signify nothing because they are words which do not represent facts, and in the course of pondering on them his mind becomes bewildered. Give him a lot of strange words of supposedly mystical import—whether Sanskrit or Latin—but which to him denote nothing definite and specific, and let him pour over them for a time, and his mind is as numbed as if he had been looking at some dazzling object. Or give him enough Scriptural passages so that anything which comes to his mind can be proved by gospel reference, and his mind becomes confused. In any one of these instances the mass of dimly perceived thoughts and meanings are so muddled in his mental makeup that he is, quite unknown to himself, enough bewildered that his critical faculties have been lulled into quietude.

In this peculiar mental state—whether induced by looking at a crystal, by looking into a hypnotist's eyes, by being on the boundary between wakefulness and sleep, by being given a hash of Scriptural passages, a conglomeration of Sanskrit words, a medley of ritual or a plethora of mystical theories—he is susceptible of being dominated by any strong suggestion that reaches him. He is as open to accepting ridiculous and unpalatable ideas as if he first had been formally put to sleep by a stage hypnotist.

Only through a recognition of this peculiar quality of the human mind can we satisfactorily account for the inconsistent mystical ideas held by many, for the irrational religious conceptions that dominate some, for the gullibility of the public by political methods, and for the silly notions some hold as to what is, and what is not, spiritual.

But of more importance to us, as cosmic alchemists, than the recognition

The Proof of Spirituality

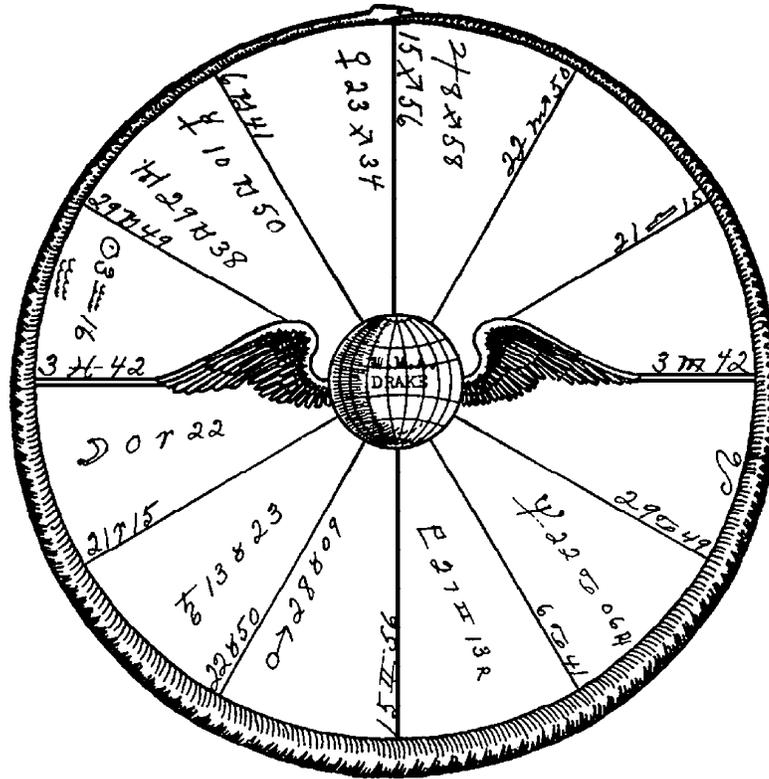
of the method by which others are brought to believe in inconsistencies, is the discernment that in forming our own conclusions in regard to what is spiritual, and what is beneficial to racial welfare, we must constantly exercise our critical faculties, and be on the alert to guard against accepting unwarranted suggestions. Nor are all these suggestions given orally, or through the printed word. They also are radiated from the minds of powerful thinkers, and wherever they find a bewildered mind, or one that through mediumship or other causes has entered a passive state, they enter and tend to dominate it. The person thinks he has plenty of proofs for his beliefs, just as does a hypnotic subject; but in fact he is dominated by a powerful suggestion.

Not only should people be alert to prevent being unduly influenced by others, but there is no need for any intelligent person to rely on the dictates of some leader to ascertain what is, and what is not spiritual. Thoughts, feelings and actions that tend to raise the dominant vibratory rate are spiritual, and thoughts, feelings and actions that tend to lower the dominant vibratory rate are unspiritual.

Whichever of the methods an individual has used to raise his dominant vibratory rate, if it has been raised sufficiently that he may be termed a spiritual individual, he is sure to exhibit that spirituality by his thoughts, feelings and actions. Not only does any effort to gain a selfish advantage over a fellowman have a coarse vibratory rate which lowers the spirituality, but to remain unmoved in the presence of injustice, or to be callous to the misery of others, also lowers the spirituality. And those who, regardless of their religious pronouncements, make no effort to correct these prevalent conditions in the world lack that refinement which indicates a high dominant vibratory rate.

Whichever of the three methods of raising his dominant vibratory rate a person has most employed in becoming spiritual, we may be sure of this, if he is truly spiritual he occupies a basic vibratory level where the welfare of every individual on earth is a matter of concern.

Abhorring both injustice and misery, the truly spiritual individual therefore rejects the idea that only the special privileged few should be permitted to enjoy such advantages as earth has to offer. Instead, he works to the end that all the people of the world should have as ample opportunity as possible to make both intellectual and spiritual progress. And this means, as explained in detail in chapter 1, that he works to enable all the people of the world to have freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom of expression and freedom of worship.



W. M. A. DRAKE

January 24, 1912, 8:49 a.m. LMT. 83:08W. 41:31N.

Data given by him personally.

1934, received A. B. degree: Venus opposition Neptune r.

1935, joined Church of Light: Sun trine Pluto r.

1939, started writing: Venus trine Mars r (third).

1942, through ESP, received inner-plane guidance in astrological studies:
Venus conjunction Uranus r.

1943, first story published: Mercury semi-sextile Moon r, Mars opposition
Jupiter r (ninth).

1944, visited C. of L. temple on inner plane: Sun sesqui-square Neptune p,
the psychic planet.

1944, started teaching at C. of L. Headquarters: Venus conjunction Sun r,
Mars (ninth) inconjunct Mercury r.

1945, trip East to further horary astrology research: Mars (ninth and third)
inconjunct Mercury r (friends).

