

Neville Goddard Lecture



The First Principle

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Do not accept any statement from scripture, the church, or an individual (including the speaker) as true until you have found God or a living truth in what is being said. What I tell you I know from experience, but I ask you not to accept my words without questioning them within yourself. It is silly to accept something simply because the church said it, or you read it in the Bible, or heard it from Neville. You must pursue the thought ceaselessly by questioning yourself.

Why do I stress this? Because among the spirit world there are many Babel's where no two speak with the same tongue. One may tell you to give up meat, while another will tell you something entirely different. This we are told in the 11th chapter of the Book of Genesis. I am not speaking of multiple tongues as the many languages we have today. We can overcome those with an interpreter; but if someone tells you: "This is the way," and another says: "No. This is the way," and they don't agree . . . you are in Babel, a city of confusion in the pathway of the spirit.

So tonight I want to talk to you about the first principle, which you can always fall back on when in doubt. This first principle is: "Be still and know that I AM God." No matter what happens turn within and be still. Know that your awareness is God and that all things are possible to you. Test yourself and you will prove this statement in the testing; then you will be free from your former limitations of belief. No matter what is happening on the outside turn to the first principle. Start by being still, then claiming: "I AM God." Ask yourself: "Is this true?" You will never know the truth until you test it.

Let us now look at some of the “I AM” statements of scripture. I AM the resurrection. I AM the life. I AM the way. I AM the truth. Are these statements really true? Yes, I have stilled myself and know that every statement is true, from experience. Being human I wanted things in the world of Caesar, as undoubtedly you do, too.

I wanted a trip I could not afford, yet I traveled over 5,000 miles by being still and saying to myself: “My awareness is God and all things are possible to him. therefore what I AM imagining will come to pass.” Then I began to imagine I was on a ship sailing towards Barbados. I remained faithful to that act, when suddenly . . . after twelve years . . . I received a letter from the family saying they would take care of all of my expenses if I would come home for Christmas. So I proved it. Then I tried it again and again, and the more I tried it the more I realized that the statement in the 46th Psalm was true: that God really is my own wonderful consciousness, for I learned to be still and know that I AM God.

I couldn't prove the other fantastic ‘I AM’ claims by taking the same action. I had to wait, and then one day I proved that I AM the life. That night I moved in spirit into an environment where I intuitively knew that, although what I was seeing seemed to be independent of my perception, if I arrested that feeling within me everything would stand still. I did it and discovered that not only the animate, but the so-called inanimate objects stood still. The falling leaves stopped in mid-flight. The blades of grass ceased to move. The bird in flight, the diners as well as the waitress . . . all were frozen as I stopped the feeling within me. Then I knew the truth of the statement: “I AM the life.”

After proving to myself that I AM the life of a state, I questioned the statement: “I AM the resurrection.” Then came the day when I felt myself resurrect within the grave of my own skull. I proved that I AM the Father, when my son came in the Spirit and called me “Father.” I discovered that I AM the one who was sacrificed, for . . . knowing I AM the Father . . . my spiritual body was split from top to bottom. Then I discovered that I was the one upon whom the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form as a dove.

These things I now know to be true from experience, therefore I speak with authority. But I say to everyone: whether you hear it from me, a church, or the Bible . . . question yourself ceaselessly until you have found the living truth in that which was said. Accept the words but then go back to first principle and ask these eternal questions to the only one who can answer them: your own wonderful I AMness.

Relax. Be still and question yourself, saying: “Are you really God?” Address yourself as though you were two. “If you are God and can do all things, prove it to me by giving me

my desire so I can feel its presence now.” See if he will prove himself in performance and when he does, do it again. Keep on asking and when he proves himself here on this level, then let these things which can’t be put to the test come through, for they will.

Now, the Bible tells us that Christ is in us and that we are in Christ. On the surface it seems to mean the same thing, but there is all the difference in the world. Christ in us is our hope of glory. That’s a universal assumption, for Christ has assumed the body of every child born of woman. But when you are in Christ you are a new creature.

Christ in you does not make you new. Christ in you is your life, for in him is life and his life is your consciousness of faith. But when you are in Christ you are called and incorporated into the body of the Risen Lord. Because Christ is in you, you are a son of God; but when you are elected . . . called into the presence of the Risen Lord and incorporated into his body . . . you are in Christ. There is all the difference in the world, for from then on scripture begins to fulfill itself within you.

If you question everything you hear from any pulpit, the speaker, or the Bible, you will find God or the living truth in what you have heard or read. I hope that you trust me, but even though you do, question everything I tell you. Don’t question me or some priest or rabbi, but turn to the first principle. Be still and say to yourself: “I AM God. I heard this statement tonight . . . is it true?”

I tell you: although it is difficult to believe, we are living in a fabulous world of shadows. This past Thursday morning as I was returning to the surface, I saw the finish of the Triple Crown race at Belmont in detail. Now this was Thursday and the race was not to be run until Saturday, but I saw the finish so clearly that if I had a million dollars I would not have hesitated to bet it all on the one I knew to be the winner. In fact I knew the race could not be reversed. It was fixed and finished. Then I asked myself: “What is this world? Is it not a school of educated darkness?”

Man thinks that in some strange way he is going to improve this world, but it is a schoolroom and will remain just that. The kingdom of heaven is not interested in improving this world; it is only interested in taking people out of this world by drawing them into itself . . . which is an entirely different world. But we can change the events in this schoolroom through the act of revision.

I had no desire to revise that race. I could have, and that which was completely finished, in detail, would have been changed. In scripture the word is “repentance,” which means “a radical change in thinking.” Tomorrow morning as you come to the surface mind,

observe and record what you are seeing, for you are observing that which will take place tomorrow or next week in this world of shadows. And if you don't like what you see, change it. Don't do as you normally do, by jumping out of bed, washing your face, and once again find yourself locked in this world of shadows; take a moment and observe your future.

I urge you to question everything that I tell you, everything you read in the Bible, and everything you hear from some pulpit, ceaselessly. Keep on questioning and questioning until you find God or the living truth in what is being said. I am telling you what I know from experience. It is true. One day you will discover that you are the life of the world, that everything you think of as permanent and independent of your perception is within you. You will know that the world reflects your thoughts.

It is a shadow and you are its life. You will realize that its activity is not out there, but in you; and you will stop it and start it again, all within yourself. So when you read: "In him was life, and his life was the light of men," you will know its truth. God is in you, yet you know him not. But when he begins to stir in you, as you, you will say: "I AM the way, the truth and the life, and besides me there is no other."

Then comes that moment in time when you know the truth of the statement recorded in the 11th chapter of John as: "I AM the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die."

Knowing you are the life, you will resurrect from the dead to die no more. You will still not know you are the one the angels spoke of, when they told the shepherds they would find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, until you hold that sign in your arms. God's son, David, will call you Father, and your spiritual body will be split in two from top to bottom. Then you will know you are the sacrificed one. And finally, you will discover you are the one upon whom the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form as a dove; then you, too, will have found the truth.

I know scripture is true, because I questioned it. I started questioning the law because I was interested in things. Having no money, I wanted a trip and I got it. Then I began to tell others, as I wanted to see them take the same principle and test it. As they proved it they told others. I invite you to prove the truth on this level, and have faith that the truth is equally true on the higher level of your being. Continue to test the law for things in this world and accept God's promises on faith, based upon what you have proved by the law.

Do you know what you want? I will tell you a simple way to get it. Simply catch the feeling that you have it and sustain that feeling. Persist in acknowledging the joy of fulfillment. In your imagination tell your friends your good news. Hear their congratulations, then allow him who heard your friends and felt your joy of fulfillment, bring it into your world, for he who can do all these things is within you as your own wonderful I AMness, your Imagination, your consciousness. That is God.

Test God, for he will not fail you. Then, when he proves himself in performance, tell a friend, and continue telling others as you exercise this law. And walk knowing all the other I AM statements are yours. Prove this in the world of shadows and you will prove the other in the world of reality.

Your I AMness is the true eternal reality. Living in a world of shadows, as you declare your I AMness you are declaring eternal truth. When you say, "I AM the resurrection," that is eternal truth. "I AM the life" is eternal truth, as well as "I AM the way." All of these bold certainties preceded with the "I AM" are eternal truths.

So, do not listen to anyone who screams at you from their tower of Babel and tells you of another way, for there is no other way. You don't have to give up meat or only eat fish on Friday in order to enter the way, for the way to the cause of all life is within you. Believe in your I AMness for there is no other God.

In First Timothy, we are told that it is God's desire that every man be saved. If it is God's desire and God is in every man, then God is saving himself. This I know to be true, for I have proved to myself that I AM God. I know I AM the life, the resurrection, and God the Father; yet I do not differ in any way from any other. I have shared my experiences with you in the hope that you will test my words and prove them in the testing.

Ceaselessly question yourself. Don't go to a priest and ask him if I am telling the truth, for he is Babel, screaming his belief, as is the rabbi. Do not go to another; turn within and apply the first principle by being still and claiming: "I AM God."

The 46th Psalm is truly a beautiful psalm. I have read where certain people in their little jokes, claim Shakespeare wrote it, incorporating himself into the chapter by making the 26th word "shake" and the 46th word from the end "spear." Others claim it was Rufus' song. Living in the 16th century, Rufus did claim that this psalm inspired his majestic hymn, which moves everyone who hears it, but he certainly did not lay claim to the psalm itself. It is "A Psalm of the Sons of Korah." Who knows who the Sons of Korah

are; I do not know. The word “Korah” means “a shaved head.” But you and I know it is a fantastic psalm; and in the 10th verse it is said: “Be still and know that I AM God.”

Tonight when you go to bed just say: “I AM.” Add any condition you want to that I AM and believe it. Speak to your imagination as though you are speaking to the God who created the universe and sustains it, for you are. When you imagine something ask yourself who is imagining it, and you will say: “I AM.” That’s God’s name forever and ever.

Imagine and fall asleep imagining. Believe that all things are possible to your own wonderful human I AMness. Test yourself! You don’t need to get down on your knees and pray to anyone on the outside. There is no need to cross yourself before any icon, for the Lord is your human imagination, your consciousness, your own wonderful I AMness.

Nothing can ever cease to be, for God . . . he who is in you as your consciousness . . . created it in love. At the present time Christ is in you, making you a son of God. But one day scripture will unfold within you and you will be in Christ, knowing yourself to be God the Father.

Do not take anything on face value. I have proved that the Bible is true, but you prove it to yourself. Ask yourself what is meant by the statement: I AM the resurrection. I AM the life. I AM the truth. I AM the way. Question yourself and you will discover the answers unfolding within you.

In the 25th chapter of Matthew, the story is told of ten virgins. Five, having no oil, are told there is none to spare, so they must go get their own. Ask yourself why they did not give to those who had nothing and it will be revealed to you that, prior to the coming of the bridegroom (who is the Lord), you thought there was a limit to that which you could give; but when you have union with the true bridegroom . . . who is all love . . . you know no limits, for everything is possible to you.

In his Book, Mark speaks of the adulteress generation. Do you know what an adulteress is? One who turns away from the truth, for when you turn from the truth you turn from the Lord. Anyone who has heard the truth and still looks for an outside cause, rather than to his inner thoughts, has committed adultery. He has turned from his spouse, whose name is “I AM.” It’s just as simple as that.

If you watched the race last night, you would have heard all these wise men tell of what should have happened, yet the race was perfect. Not one person on that field could have done anything other than what he did. I could have told them, but who would listen to one who can't even ride a horse, let alone train one. Having seen the race prior to its running, I couldn't get excited when I watched it on television, for I knew exactly who was going to win. Then I realized that if everyone knew the end there would be no excitement.

We live in a wonderful world, thinking we are going to change things, but nothing is changed on the outside. They can only be changed from within. I had no desire to change the race, so I saw it just as it would have to come out unless someone who knows the law had changed it from within.

I ask you to apply the law and change the seemingly inevitable ends . . . from within. I am telling you the truth based upon my own experiences. Your I AMness is God, he who is the resurrection in you. He is the life of your physical body, the life of the bird in the air and the leaf on the tree. One day you will feel a vibration within you and know that if you arrest it everything you perceive will die, yet not vanish. It will not decay, but will remain frozen in time and space forever, for it has no life. You . . . life itself . . . animate it. Then you will release that vibration and everything will become animated once more.

In the 4th chapter of the Book of Luke, we read the statement made in the 61st chapter of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me." This statement I know to be true, yet I ask you not to accept my experiences, but to question them by questioning the one being who can give you all the answers. He will, when he feels himself in you. Then he will reveal himself to you in the first person singular in a present tense experience.

Everyone is going to have these experiences, but when I do not know. Don't let anyone tell you that you have so many days, months, years, or lifetimes to come. Challenge it now! I have experienced scripture. Take my words and ask yourself to prove them to you now. Then let him unfold within you, and when he does, this world will lose its value to you. You will wonder what the fighting is all about. Why should anyone fight over shadows? Don't criticize anyone. If those who have a billion want two . . . so that they can be the richest dummy in the grave . . . pray for them by asking the only being who can grant your prayer, and that being is your own wonderful human imagination.

Don't struggle doing it. Ask yourself who is hearing the good news you just heard and you will answer: "I AM." That's God. That's the being who heard the request. Now grant it and let it happen. God heard it when you heard it because God is your own wonderful

I AMness, and remember: all that you ask in your Father's name he will grant you and your Father's name is I AM.

Now let us go into the Silence.