

Practice of Thriving

Opening to Divine Abundance Everywhere

1.0

Based on the book
by Edwene Gaines

Power of Prosperity

The
Four *Spiritual*
Laws *of* Prosperity





www.ThrivingInUnity.org



This program was adapted from an email program called Power of Prosperity x 12. The full 12 month program is available at www.unity.org, under Publications. These can be used as emails to your congregation, as articles in your newsletters, or as inserts in your Sunday bulletin. Congregants can use as a part of their personal spiritual practice around prosperity. For this program it has been re-designed as an eight month process to align with Thriving in Unity.

Forgiveness

This is truly a spiritual practice that challenges us to move beyond the bounds of our ego. How is it connected to prosperity? As we defined it, prosperity is the condition of having what we need when we need it. It encompasses strength, health, material goods, healthy relationships, anything we need for fullness of life or to realize the kingdom of God. When we are holding onto a perceived unfairness or hurtful deed, we damage our ability to enjoy this fullness of life. Forgiveness helps us to become a clean vessel to hold all the good God has for us. It restores us to a right relationship with the Christ within as well as with others in our lives.

We can forgive. Lewis Smedes, in his little gem of a book, *Forgive and Forget*, says that forgiveness for deep wounds has four stages:

1. We feel the **hurt** when someone has done something we cannot forget and are pushed into the “crisis of forgiveness;”
2. We feel **hate** that keeps us from wishing our “enemy” well and often want that person to suffer as we did;
3. **Healing**—we see the person with new eyes, our memory is healed, and the pain has stopped—we are free again;
4. **Coming together**—we invite that person back into our life, if he/she comes back honestly and both of us harmonize our hearts and words with reality. The fourth step is not always necessary, and depends on both persons.

Sometimes our prayer is simply to have the willingness to forgive. Or we may not feel ready to forgive in this moment, but we can ask the Christ within to do so. Wherever you are in the process, it is important to your own health and prosperity. Edwene Gaines reminds us that lack of forgiveness is like taking poison and expecting the other person to die. Getting past stage 2 can be a major challenge, but we must persist. Forgiveness is not necessarily a one time event—we may need to do it repeatedly before we are truly cleansed of the hurt.

Remember that forgiveness is like peeling an onion. We may start with the outer layers, and then find that there is more that we didn't consciously realize. You will know you have forgiven completely when you can speak about the incident without any negative energy. It takes ruthless honesty to know when forgiveness is complete.

Over the many years since the founding of Unity, many people have experienced the need to forgive. Charles Fillmore sat for two hours every evening working on forgiveness. Twelve-Step spirituality includes it, and when it was adapted for the Master Mind process, forgiveness found a place there as well. Clearly, it is central to Christianity and to the teachings of Unity.

What the Bible Says

“Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.” —Mark 11:25

“But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,” he said to the one who was paralyzed “I say to you, stand up and take your bed and go to your home.” —Luke 5:24

“Then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them back to the land you gave to their fathers.” —1Kings 8:34

“Then Peter came and said to him, ‘Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.’” —Matt 18: 21-22

What Fillmore Says

“But we must recognize the unity of the race in Christ and include all people in our forgiving.” —*Jesus Christ Heals*

“If we forgive others we shall be forgiven, and the penalty of suffering for sins will be eliminated.” —*Jesus Christ Heals*

“Sin: missing the mark, that is, falling short of divine perfection.” —*The Revealing Word*

Ideas for Practice

- Take your “forgiveness project” into prayer. As you work through the stages of forgiveness, pray for this person and the relationship, leaving the end results to God. One way to gain insight into your situation is to draw a picture. With colored markers or crayons, draw a picture of the person and yourself—stick figures, random or geometric shapes—anything goes, as long as it represents the situation in some way to you. Now look at it, and answer these questions in your journal: Where are you? Where is the other person? What is the unforgiveness like? Where is God? What else do you notice about the picture?
- Discuss your practice with your prayer triad. What do you notice is happening with your companions? With yourself? Are you able to begin to wish well to the persons you are trying to forgive? Commit to hold each other in the forgiving light of love in your daily prayer between meetings.

Power of Prosperity

Messages

Forgiveness

In the prosperity principle, we learn that as we give we also receive. The Bible also equates the giving of forgiveness to receiving it. Jesus taught forgiveness as a way to freedom and healing. We know that judgment is something that only God can do, so we find ourselves healed in letting go of the job that is not ours. Through forgiveness, we loosen our grip on our ego self being in control, and allow God to be God.

Forgiveness is in itself a powerful tool for transformation. This is clearly demonstrated in the Bible through the many healings that Jesus did in which he forgave people. Relationships and community are one of the main ways that God has given us for transformation. As we are in relationship, we are brought face to face with our ego-self, and called to a higher way.

Sometimes our lack of forgiveness for others reflects our lack of it for ourselves. Forgiving ourselves is an important step in forgiving others. As we come to wholeness through realizing we are worthy of forgiveness in the eyes of Christ within, we are healed and free. We have come into the right relationship with ourselves and others around us when we forgive, and have realized the perfection to which God calls us.

Prosperity can only be ours if there is room in our hearts. Through forgiveness and letting go, we are able to make ourselves a clear channel for the flow of prosperity. There is the analogy of the Dead Sea, which has a flow in, but no flow out. In a sense, we become a stagnant, “dead sea” when we are unable to let go of that which no longer serves us.

What the Bible says

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”

—Luke 6:37

“Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.” —Rom 14:4

“For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get.”
—Matt 7:2

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”
—Luke 6:37

What Fillmore Says

“True repentance is always followed by forgiveness, which is a complete wiping out of the error thought from consciousness and a full deliverance from the inharmony that the error thought has produced.”
—*Mysteries of Genesis*

“If anyone tries to free himself while holding others in the thought of sin, he will not demonstrate his freedom.”
—*Jesus Christ Heals*

“Forgiveness really means giving up something. When you forgive yourself, you cease doing the thing that you ought not to do... We forgive sin in ourselves every time we resolve to think and act according to the divine law.”
—*Jesus Christ Heals*

“Do you love your enemies? Do you bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that spitefully use you? This is required of one who seeks the new birth.”
—*Talks on Truth*

Ideas for Practice

- Select a passage or passages from above that are meaningful to you. Memorize and use them in your prayer. Throughout the day, whenever you feel the need to forgive, use them as affirmations that will help focus your mind on the Christ and loosen the grip of unforgiveness.
- Another way of thinking about forgiveness is letting go. We are all familiar with the feeling of closing our fist on something in order to keep it. As we do so, we have lost our hand. We lose something when we hang onto an unfair or wrong deed. One step in prosperity is to clear out what is no longer needed in order to be open to receive our good. Are you holding onto things, physical, mental or spiritual, that you no longer need? Practice letting go with the ones that are easiest first—you could do this by clearing out the refrigerator, the office file cabinet, or even your sock drawer! Feel the relief of letting go of what no longer serves. Then, try visualizing yourself forgiving a specific person, and bring this feeling of relief into the picture. Write about this experience in your journal.
- Take these ideas into the silence. Picture the Christ within you as a bright light of healing and forgiveness. As you do so, bring persons into that light whom you want to forgive. Practice this repeatedly until you are able to let go of any grievances.
- Discuss your practice with your prayer triad. What do you notice is happening with your companions? With yourself? Commit to hold each other in the forgiving light of love in your daily prayer between meetings.

Power of Prosperity

Messages

Purpose

Our divine purpose is found in doing that which is joyful for us, as well as knowing we are aligned with God. The most inspiring purpose for the individual or the church is also found through discernment (opening to the leading of God) and following the guidance of the Christ within. The purpose, akin to a mission, is something you will always be working on, and it will never be completed. Your divine purpose is that which you were sent to this time and place to do.

An example of personal purpose is: To understand and connect with God in myself and others. If we are aligned with God in what we are doing, and we are joyful in it, it cannot help but prosper. The universe honors an intention that is aligned with God. The other side of this is that if something is not working for you, is your purpose in it aligned with the divine purpose? Once you know your divine purpose, this is a good test for any endeavor.

Clearly, our purpose is connected to our prosperity. In the following passages, we can see that our ability to find success in our endeavors is to align with God. Sometimes, this may appear to be the difficult way to go. Yet, ultimately, God is working out the divine purpose in us, and it can do nothing but succeed. Working against it will only lead to dead ends and an energy drain. In the long run, this is the more difficult way.

What the Bible Says

“I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.” —Job 42:2

“But he said to them, ‘I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose.’”
—Luke 4:43

“The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever...”
—Psalm 138:8

“The human mind may devise many plans, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will be established.”
—Proverbs 19:21

“We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.”
—Romans 8:28

What Fillmore Says

“Purpose gives life real meaning. Purpose gives joy and zest to living. When our eye is on the goal we are not so easily perturbed. Purpose awakens new trains of thought; purpose directs these trains of thought into new fields of achievement. Really to succeed we must have some great purpose in mind, some goal toward which we are to work. But above all, we must always purpose in our heart to achieve spiritually.” —*Teach Us to Pray*, Charles and Cora Fillmore

“All things should be done with purpose, with pleasure as a concomitant only. Pleasure lends zest to all action, but it should never be exalted to the high place of consciousness.”

—*The Twelve Powers of Man*, Charles Fillmore

Ideas for Practice

- What is your personal purpose? Begin by paying attention to your daily activities for a week, making notes in your journal of those areas that bring you joy. In the second week, look back over the last month or even year for any accomplishments that were joyful. For the rest of the month, take these notes into prayer, seeking to see your purpose in the light of God. (Remember, it takes 21 days to instill a new idea into consciousness.) What is God leading you to be in the world? Refer to the earlier example of a personal purpose: To understand and connect with God in myself and others. What action words come to mind that describe what brings you joy (i.e., understand and connect, serve, coordinate, write, speak)? What is the principle for which you will work in this (i.e., for God, for peace, for family, for church)? When you have it, commit it to paper and continue to hold it before God. Add to it any other thoughts as they occur to you.
- Select a passage from above or from a favorite resource that speaks to you. In the monastic tradition of *Lectio Divina*, read the passage until you are very familiar with it, aloud or at least whispered to yourself. Then spend some time with each of the following questions in turn. What did the author mean at the time? What does it mean in your life right now? What do you feel about it? Let your feelings pour out in prayer. Finally, rest in silence for a time, simply breathing in God’s presence.
- In your prayer triad share your thoughts and any surprises that came out of the exercises above. Hold each other in prayer throughout the month.



Purpose

As we work in alignment with God, we know that the flow of prosperity continues to circulate. The channels for good are clear as we work in the same direction as God's purpose. This is why alignment with our divine purpose is so important to prosperity.

It is a time to continue to deepen the sense of alignment with God in the direction we take in our lives. It is this alignment that leads to our prosperity and success in any endeavor. The divine purpose for this world is wonderful beyond all our imagining, yet we can dream of our own part in that grand purpose. And as the song says, "if we can dream it, we can do it." We can connect to our joy, a sure sign that we are aligning with our best and highest.

What the Bible Says

"...My purpose shall stand, and I will fulfill my intention..." —Isaiah 46:10

"...so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it."
—Isaiah 55:11

"Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose."
—1 Corinthians 1:10

"For the scripture says to Pharaoh, 'I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.'"
—Romans 9:17

What Fillmore Says

“It is your mission to express all that you can imagine God to be.”

—*Talks on Truth*, Charles Fillmore

“Man must go back to his Source and let its clear light flood his whole being with Truth. He must lay aside forever the idea of serving two masters and must look to the one Master, even Christ, the spiritual consciousness within... It is the mission of every man born into the world to fulfill the law of Being...”

—*Keep a True Lent*, Charles Fillmore

“The real object of life is not making money or becoming famous, but the building of character, the bringing forth of the potentialities that exist in every one of us.”

—*Prosperity*, Charles Fillmore

Ideas for Practice

- Test your purpose. Is it bigger than you? A wise person once said, “If it’s not impossible, God’s not in it.” Does your purpose call you to have a larger view of life? Something that you cannot do under your ego power, but only under your power united with Christ within you? Journal about these questions: What am I spending my life on? What do I want to spend it on? What is it that connects me most with the Christ within? Using these questions multiple times may help to clarify. Keep notes in your journal
- If you have not yet had a strong sense of your purpose, keep working with these ideas. Spend some time journaling and see what comes up for you. You are in God’s perfect timetable.
- Continue with the prayer triad. Share your thoughts about the questions you’re considering. Support one another in spending your life on what is meaningful to you.



Purpose

Why are goals so important for prosperity? As Catherine Ponder put it in *Dare to Prosper*, "... the mind is the connecting link between man and the rich but unformed substance of the universe. If you never think definitely about the prosperous results you desire, no mental contact is made with the rich substance of the universe."

It may seem obvious that goals help us to focus our energy toward accomplishing what we want to do. The more specific, the better. But how does this work for us spiritually? Taking the time to get specific about what we want is one of the best gifts we can give ourselves and the world. When we take time to connect with what it is we really want, not just what's been programmed for us by others or by our position in life, we re-establish the connection with our deeper yearnings. We make contact with the rich substance of the universe.

If you think about setting goals, you know that in order to do so, you must have an understanding of who you are and your own capabilities and resources. Prosperity means having what you need, when you need it, whether material or intangible. In order to set goals, then, we start by connecting with our own identity in God. We are the Beloved, the Chosen of God. As such, our goals aligned with God have the mark of success.

This is where God comes in. It's a cycle: the more we are aligned with God's purpose, the more we can envision how we can manifest that purpose through our goals, the more likely we are to live and manifest our highest good, and the more we are aligned with God's purpose.

What the Bible Says

“Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.” —Phil. 3:12

“Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you.” —Matt. 7:7

“And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.’” —Mark 1:11

What Fillmore Says

“Superconsciousness is the goal humanity is now working.”
—*Atom-Smashing Power of the Mind*, Charles Fillmore

“We are to be the very light itself and we can only be the light by becoming so pure that it cannot help but shine through us....” —*Jesus Christ Heals*, Charles Fillmore

“In love God gave His only begotten Son, the fullness of the perfect-man idea in Divine Mind, the Christ, to be the true, spiritual self of every individual.”
—*Mysteries of John*, Charles Fillmore

Ideas for Practice

- Edwene Gaines, in her book, *The Four Spiritual Laws of Prosperity*, suggests beginning to write down your desires, including those that sound fun. This is because our joy is where our heart is, and if we follow that, we will also be tuned in to God’s yearning for us. Another suggestion is to envision yourself at the end of your life, and look back on all the things you have accomplished and enjoyed. In your journal, use one or both of these ideas to create a list. Play with these ideas and be creative and outrageous. Remember to be specific, too—a test for specificity is whether there is a future time when you will be able to say, “I’ve accomplished that.” Create a worksheet with columns that read: “Goal, Target Date, Resources Needed, Other People Involved.” For example, you may want to grow in prosperity, but your specific goal may be, “Study Edwene Gaines’ book, *The Four Spiritual Laws of Prosperity* by the end of the month.” The target date is 1 month from today. The resource is to obtain the book, and it is something you can do alone, but you could also gather your prayer triad and discuss it.
- Look back over your list of ideas and select the ones that really speak to your heart. Hold your list in prayer and see if any ideas hold a greater resonance. Do the goals you set above need more specific intermediate steps? What are they? How is God present in these experiences and steps? Pick one step you can take today, two to three steps you can take in the next three months, the next six months, and the next year. You now have a plan of action for living out your goals. Take time in silence to simply bless your plan and consecrate it to God’s purpose.
- If you haven’t set goals for your spiritual life, do so. Imagine what it would take to grow to the next level of spiritual maturity or consciousness. Are there practices you would like to incorporate? How often will you do them? Make a covenant with yourself for a realistic practice. Keep this in your journal so you can refer to it often.
- Continue to meet in your prayer triad, sharing your thoughts and praying together on these themes.



Setting Goals

We know that as we set goals, we are creating a picture of what we want. This is a way of holding thoughts in mind that will manifest for us. As we do so, we attract all the resources we need to achieve that goal. Getting specific about what we want and the resources required will help us to work in the flow of the universe and its supply.

What are your desires? You tuned into those in the section on Divine Purpose—can you make them more specific? A wise person said that when you feel a desire, it is God’s way of knocking on the door of the heart. This month, we again focus on what brings joy and connection with God in order to see our specific goals.

Do you have your goals in mind? Do you have an understanding of your divine purpose? These are both important steps in achieving the prosperity consciousness we desire.

We are reminded that whatever we think about is what we become. That is why goals are so important. Besides, the more we connect in prayer with God, our divine purpose, and our goals, the greater our success in achieving our goals.

What the Bible Says

“Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.”
—Matt. 18:19

“So I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.”
—Mark 11:24

What Fillmore Says

“You are Spirit, the Son of God, and your place is at the right hand of the Father. To realize this is to call down upon yourself the baptism of the Holy Spirit...”

—*Talks on Truth*, Charles Fillmore

“If your prosperity does not become manifest as soon as you pray and affirm God as your substance, your supply, and your support, refuse to give up. Show your faith by keeping up the work.”

—*Prosperity*, Charles Fillmore

“This law operates in every department of being. Those who seek the things that the material realm has to offer usually find them. Those who strive for moral excellence usually attain that goal. Those who aspire to spiritual rewards are also rewarded. The law is that we get what we want and work for, and all experience and history have proved it a good law.”

—*Prosperity*, Charles Fillmore

Ideas for Practice

- Review the goals you set, including the steps to reaching them. Start with one goal per day. Become quiet, and meditate on your goals and steps, one at a time. Visualize how they will look, feel, smell, taste, and sound once they are accomplished. Do the same with your intermediate steps.
- Do you encounter resistance? If a particular step or goal seems difficult, be sure to break them down to their smallest components. For instance, my goal is to complete a study of prosperity so that I can teach others, and an intermediate step is to read Edwene Gaines’ book (*The Four Spiritual Laws of Prosperity*). I feel resistant to it, or I just haven’t gotten around to it. I can break it down further. For example, the steps might be to go online to order the book, then to order it, to read it, to talk with friends about discussing it together.
- Another idea, if you encounter resistance, is to sit in silence with it. Allow yourself to really feel the resistance, without trying to identify it—just let it be what it is. Usually, we will notice that it goes away. If not, explore what the resistance is about. Write about this experience in your journal.
- Continue to meet with your prayer triad. Talk about your goals, and your practice. Master Minding is a great practice here as well.

Power of Prosperity

Messages

Tithing

Tithing is the practice of giving 10 % of what we receive back to God. At a deeper level, it reminds us of the presence of God within us. As with other practices, such as prayer and forgiveness, tithing is a component of our relationship with God. As such, it is less about money than it is about a deeper spirituality.

So often in our world, we find that we have divided our lives into compartments. There's our church self, our work self, our family self, our financial self and so on. But spirituality touches us holistically. For example, if we want to live in the presence of God full time, we know we can't confine our prayer life to only when we're in church. Prayer is important in our family, our work, our friendships, every day of the week—we wouldn't think of keeping prayer only for Sundays. So it is with all our "compartments." We cannot keep our financial lives walled off from God.

One of the greatest spiritual challenges in our time of fragmentation is to bring our entire lives into integrity with what we believe and love. When we love God, there is no part of our lives that is separate from God. Sooner or later, to grow in our relationship with God, we all realize this. After all, it is God who gives us everything to begin with. It is an act of worship to place ourselves and all we are and have back into God's care and disposal.

This brings us back to the practice of tithing. What we do with our lives, our families, our work, our church, and our finances are ultimately matters between each individual and God. This is what the word *stewardship* means—that God has given us our life and all that is in it, and we are responsible for its use. This month we focus on really listening to our hearts, to that place within connected to God to see what our financial lives are meant to be. Tithing is simply a time-tested discipline that countless people have found to be important and fruitful in connecting their spirituality and their tangible lives. For many, it is the goal to place their trust in God to the extent of tithing from their financial good.

What the Bible Says

“You are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you...” —Isa 43:4

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

—Luke 12:32

“Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

—2 Cor 9:7

“...just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve...” —Matt 20:28

What Fillmore Says

“When we groan and sweat under the stress and strain of life, we are serving Satan instead of God. The satanic consciousness would make us believe that there is limited amount of the things necessary to life and that we must labor hard to get our share. It is true that such conditions do come upon those who have turned their faces from God.... All work becomes divine for man when he affirms that he is working for God and that God is a generous paymaster.... When we praise God and give thanks for His supply and support we open our mind to the inflow of the abundant spiritual essence of all things.”

—*Keep a True Lent*, Charles Fillmore

“Jacob’s vow to be more faithful to God and to give Him one tenth of all he received is a recognition of God as the source of all that man requires and also of the need of a constant reminder of this fact; hence the agreement to give back the tithe. Those who practice tithing testify that it leads them into an understanding of the relation of God to material affairs that they can get in no other way.”

—*Mysteries of Genesis*, Charles Fillmore

“In his inner consciousness man can make an agreement of this kind [tithing] with the Mind of Spirit and can keep it in his everyday affairs. Many metaphysicians write out such contracts and put them away in the full assurance that the terms will be carried out by both contracting parties, God and man. It is found by nearly everyone who tries this plan that the agreement is fulfilled.”

—*Mysteries of Genesis*, Charles Fillmore

“The covenant of Jacob to give one tenth of all his increase was the real beginning of what we in modern times we call tithing: making God a partner in all our finances.”

—*Teach Us to Pray*, Charles Fillmore

“Give of your substance with the thought that it is God’s money you are handling. Realize that it is His tenth that you are giving for His glory. With this thought in your mind you will begin to attract new spiritual resources, and things will begin to open up in your affairs.... Take God into partnership with you and you will demonstrate abundance.”

—*Teach Us to Pray*, Charles Fillmore

Ideas for Practice

- As you worked on your purpose, your goals and forgiveness, what items remain unfinished? Continue to work with these items as you consider tithing
- Select a passage or passages from above that are meaningful to you. Memorize and use them in your prayer. Throughout the day, whenever you feel fear about your financial resources, repeat them.
- Consider your current pattern of giving. Imagine yourself with the sum of your gifts in your hands. You stand before the Christ within you. As you offer it, what feelings do you have? What is the response of the Christ within? Write a dialogue resulting from your imagery. What does it mean to you? What is the Christ presence like? How does she/he respond to your thoughts and feelings?
- Many people are resistant to tithing, because of the strict way it is presented. If you feel resistance, sit in silence. Welcome your feelings of resistance. Allow yourself to feel them and explore their texture. What happens in you with this exercise? Have a conversation with your inner Christ about your feelings. Listen for the response. What is the Christ saying to you? What is the heart of Christ like in this moment? Allow all these things to be, and conclude by simply listening for your heart’s desire and wisdom. Do this as many times as it takes to feel a true openness and clarity from the wisdom within you
- Continue to meet with your prayer triad. Discuss any resistance you have to tithing. Share stories of when you have given something and it was a joyful experience for you. Share any other experiences you have with the practices listed above.



Tithing

There are three ways in which tithing functions in our spiritual communities. First, it makes a statement that acknowledges God as the ultimate owner of the universe. Second, it gives resources to support the mission of the church or center—that of building a sustainable world of spiritual consciousness. Third, it requires us to trust God for our personal needs. All three of these build our own consciousness as givers. We recognize that giving and receiving is not so much about an exchange, but it is about creating faithful and healthy communities locally and globally. In this, all who participate are blessed. In Unity, we recognize that we can only receive when we have an open heart, one that is opened by the act of giving itself.

Think about it. What brings you the greatest joy? It is written in the everyday work we do, the ways we interact with others when at our best. We are most alive when we are expressing our truest selves, when we are sharing that which is within us. We are most alive when we are giving. There is no meaning or joy in keeping our skills, our gifts, or our lives all to ourselves.

What the Bible Says

“...give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

—Luke 6:38

“Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.”

—John 16:23

“A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, ‘Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury.’”

—Mark 12:42-43

“Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing.” —Mal 3:10

“And he said to them, ‘Pay attention to what you hear; the measure you give will be the measure you get, and still more will be given you.’” —Matt 4:24

What Fillmore Says

“Without giving the soul shrivels, but when giving is practiced as a part of Christian living, the soul expands and becomes Godlike in the grace of liberality and generosity. No restoration to the likeness of God can be complete unless mind, heart and soul are daily opening out into that large, free, bestowing spirit which so characterizes our God and Father.”

—*Prosperity*

“The natural seeks to hold onto all that it can gain by fair or unfair means, but the heart self, as soon as it has had a vision of the infinite, seeks in its turn to give.”

—*Mysteries of Genesis*

“In order that the plan of giving may be successful there are several things that must be observed. First there must be a willing mind... Secondly, the giving must be done in faith, and there must be no withholding because the offering seems small... A third requisite... is that the offering shall be a just and fair proportion of all that one receives.”

—*Prosperity*

“If the mind is free from attachment to money or love of it, and lovingly concentrated on the divine substance, there is never failure in the demonstration.”

—*Keep a True Lent*

“By the act of tithing, men make God their partner in their financial transactions and thus keep the channel open from the source in the ideal to the manifestation in the realm of things. Whoever thinks that he is helping to keep God’s work going in the earth cannot help but believe that God will help him.”

—*Keep a True Lent*

Ideas for Practice

- How is your financial life in general? Is bill-paying a tough task? Here's a paraphrase of an exercise Edwene recommends. Take each bill, one at a time, and hold it in your hands. Surround the company or person with the light of God. Consider that they have trusted you by first providing a product or service that you need. This is not unlike the way that God treats us, always giving us what we need when we need it. Bless the persons involved. For example, if it's your cell phone bill, bless the people who built the cell towers, those who host them, those who created the computer programs, the communication you enjoyed, and so on. (Don't forget your teenage daughter and all the people she talked with!) Welcome them all as gifts in your life, and spend a few moments in appreciation, as you write your check or set up your online payment. What is God's response to your appreciation? Write in your journal about how this experience touched you.
- One of the suggestions Edwene Gaines makes is to tithe for 6 months. Give yourself a chance to really experience the practice of giving 10% off the gross of what you receive. At the end of six months, take time to ruminate on your experience. What has changed in your outer life? What has changed within you? What is your heart leading you to do for God in the future?
- As an alternative to starting out with tithing, try this: Start out smaller with percentage giving, and make a plan for working up to tithing. Make a contract with yourself and God as suggested by Charles Fillmore. For example: **Insert Covenant here.**

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Dedication and Covenant.

We, Charles Fillmore and
Myrtle Fillmore, husband and wife,
freely dedicate ourselves, our time, our
money, all we have and all we expect
to have, to the Spirit of Truth, and through
it, to the Society of Silent Unity.

It being understood and
agreed that the said Spirit of Truth
shall render unto us an equivalent
for this dedication, in peace of mind,
health of body, wisdom, understanding,
love, ^{life} and an abundant supply of
all things necessary to meet every
want without our making any of these
things the object of our existence.

~~Tested~~ In the presence of the
Conscious Mind of Christ Jesus, this
7th day of December, 1892.

Charles Fillmore
Myrtle Fillmore

