


**Today's Lesson**  
*A Matter of Why?*  
 PowerPoint notes available at:  
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**A Matter of Why?**



Here's a thought:  
 When the first human discovered self-awareness and became conscious of themselves, what was the first thought they had and did it include the question *why?*


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From that first thought humankind has been on an eternal quest to answer the “why” and to understand its message, its meaning.

Somewhere along the way humankind developed ways in which to answer the “whys” through the use of our thought process.

One of those ways was to develop a form of religion to answer their questions and to assign deities to the powers of nature they did not understand or could not answer.


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From the first known religion to today's world religions, humankind is still trying to answer the question of “why?”

Charles Fillmore thought he had found a way to help answer the question of “why.”


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On the matter of “why” Fillmore believed that religion and psychology were needed to help explain the “whys” in our lives. There were two schools of thought emerging at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century:

- Fundamentalist Religion and
- Psychology of Being

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He wrote:

*There is an urgent need of teachers on both the mental and spiritual plane of consciousness if the race is to go forward in development. To this end there needs to be more co-operation between these two schools, because they complement each other.*

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*Religion becomes practical and effective when psychology is part of its litany. Without it, religion fails to give proper attention to the outlet of newfound knowledge. In fact religion, comprehended in its fullness, includes psychology.*

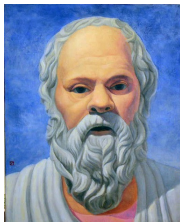
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And Fillmore was not without his critics:

*The carping critic cries, “Your religion is psychology instead of Christianity.” Our answer is that the new Christianity includes an understanding of psychology and does not stop with an analysis of the mind but goes on to the highest phase of mind’s possibility, unity with Spirit.*

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The only good is knowledge and the only evil is ignorance.  
~Socrates

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While Unity ushered in Practical Christianity, Fundamentalism continued on its course of keeping science and religion separate.

As the New Thought movement emerged and grew so did another aspect within its teachings. The concept of ***Absolutism***, which over time turned out to be just as damaging to the human spirit as Fundamentalism was in trying to answer the “whys” in our lives.

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Here’s how it works:

***Fundamentalism:***

***Sin - Sinner – Guilt***

***Absolutism:***

***Missing the Mark – Not perfect – Guilt***

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The guilt cycle stays the same no matter which one you use. It goes like this:

***Guilt - punishment - fear - denial - projection - guilt***

What we end up with is the seven step cycle that leads to demoralizing, oppressive, guilt, materializing (as) affirmations (DOGMA).

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The seven steps:

**Step one:** *Sin or Missing the Mark is not being connected to God.*

**Step two:** *Sinner or Not Perfect is a belief something is wrong with us.*

**Step three:** *Guilt creates the feeling that we are not worthy of God's love, God's good, God's kingdom.*

**Step four:** *Punishment is our need to correct the "wrong" through a described method of punishment.*

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**Step five:** *Fear builds up and we create scenarios about "what's going to happen if we don't get it right."*

**Step six:** *Denial tells us to avoid and pretend there are no problems.*

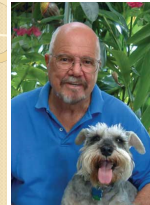
**Step seven:** *Projection. Yea, I'm okay, it's the world that messed up. After all, I am a spiritual being having a human experience. It's not me, it's them. This works fine until one day we look into the mirror and see the imperfection and the cycle starts all over again.*

### ***A Matter of Why?***

The late Walter Starcke, national speaker, and spiritual author had this to say about the "**whys**" of the spiritual paradox in his book, It's All God:

*I have been helplessly driven all my life by what has simplistically turned out to be an inability to accept either/or. On one side there has been an insatiable appetite to experience and merge with what is universally conceived of as God. On the other hand, though the Lord knows I have tried, I have been unable in the process to ignore, reject, or dishonor my personal presence as a materialized human being.*

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*The carrot that has constantly dangled before my eyes is the possibility that I can arrive at and live with the full compatible and simultaneous realization that my two selves are one and the same. Until I found out how to reconcile the two stands of my nature—the subjective spiritual, and the objective physical—I had always felt that I was out of place and that something was wrong with me.*

### ***A Matter of Why?***

Who of us at one time or another have also had the same feeling that something was wrong with us. Most of us left traditional main line churches and faiths because of the dogmatic teachings told us we were bad. We changed one set of "you should be and act this way" for another set as we continued to find ways to get answers to our "why." And now we are on the threshold of taking another paradigm shift in understanding the whys in our lives as we study Progressive Christianity and the freedoms it will bring to our understandings.

### ***A Matter of Why?***



Progressive Christianity: You are already perfect in Spirit. **Why** are we here then? To learn to become fully human and live at the place where the divine and human meet.