



ABRIDGED VERSION

The Seeker, The Search, The Sacred is published by Weiser Books

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THE SEEKER

Every truth ever discovered—each new spiritual light that will ever burn bright—has already been seeded in our consciousness. All we will ever know and share about love, humility, compassion, and sacrifice—the secrets that will reveal and then resolve old sorrows—awaits us within ourselves. Hidden in this truth is our great promise, both as individuals and as a race of beings. I call these timeless ideas that ignite and stir us to remember our forgotten spiritual heritage “seeds of fire.”

This means that the new and higher self-understanding for which we search is already a part of those who seek it, as it’s always found there, within us, or not at all. And further, it is the Sacred itself that secretly initiates the search! Which brings us to a startling revelation, and a fine starting point for a new way to understand something of our True Nature: There is but one timeless Self seemingly divided into three parts that we will call: “The Seeker, the Search, the Sacred.”

Can a collection of hundreds of thoughts—spread out across a vast expanse of space and time—spoken world-over by thousands of different voices—reveal this unseen and elusive fact of our great singularity? The answer is an unqualified “Yes!”— but only when each of these seeds of fire is realized for what it is: the expressed reflection of the divine mind from which they all radiate, not unlike the light from the sun which reveals itself in the glimmer of a thousand diamonds as they dance upon the sea.

There is a very old idea that, as best can be determined, comes to us from the days of the early Christian Desert Fathers. In six concise words it touches upon a certain fact of human nature that even volumes of books would prove unable to express any better: “Fish swim, birds fly... man prays.”

In other words, it’s the nature of fish to glide through water, for birds to soar through open skies, because they are at home there. Sea and sky, accordingly, are the worlds of their origin, where they belong, the place where they are free. But where is our true home? What is the nature of that place where our original self is one with its longing to explore its own deepest possibilities, and where discovering the treasures waiting there is the same as fulfilling our purpose for being? What world is there for us where our essential nature—and its right to live free—are one and the same?

We’re granted a quick glimpse of this secret destination in these spirit-filled lines from American poet Walt Whitman’s classic work, *Leaves of Grass*.

Would you sound below the restless ocean of the entire world? Would you know the dissatisfaction? the urge and spur of every life; the something never still’d—never entirely gone? the invisible need of every seed? It is the central urge in every atom to return to its divine source and origin, however distant.

Throughout time, spanning all cultures, religious climate, and incumbent social values, the great saints, mystics, and masters of all traditions repeat one great story line, as evidenced in the following select quotations.

The Masters Speak of the Seeker

God made the senses turn outward, man therefore looks outward, not into himself.
Sometimes a daring man has looked round and found himself. Then he is immortal!
—Katha Upanishad (4th c. BCE, India)

Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee.
—Saint Augustine (354–430, Algeria)

The whole world is you. Yet you keep thinking there is something else.
—Hsüeh-Feng I-ts'un (822–908, China)

I laugh when I hear that the fish in the water are thirsty. You don't grasp the fact that what is most alive of all is inside your own house; and so you walk from one holy city to the next with a confused look!
—Kabir (1398–1518, India)

Religion is the first thing and the last thing, and until a man has found God and been found by God, he begins at no beginning, he works to no end.
—H. G. Wells (1866–1946, England)

THE SEARCH

Regardless of its time, place, or whatever particular religious path we may call our own, it seems apparent that one belief is held true by all: hidden somewhere within our nascent soul dwells a yet-to-be realized greatness...an interior Character that transcends and defies any description, east or west.

Even so—unrealized as this celestial nature yet may be—we all feel some part of its timeless presence within us in the way it quietly, ceaselessly “tugs” upon our heart and mind; call this unrest what you will, most of us feel a constant longing to be patient, kind, and to love without fear, a state of self made even more apparent to us whenever we miss the mark!

As such, we are vessels filled with a kind of divine discontent; our struggle is, and always has been the attempt to reconcile this unknowable disturbance with something known. And so we search and search outside of ourselves for what we imagine has the power to grant our restless heart the peace it seeks, but always to no avail. Even the greatest magnet in the world can’t draw water from a well.

It seems clear: if we hope to ever find an answer to this longing of ours—to search out the source of our own innate holiness—then not only must we come upon a new and higher order of self-knowledge, but its nature must also take us in a completely new direction. Yet, where is one to look when all the known roads through this world lead back to the same level of reality from where we started our journey?

Dr. Maurice Nicoll, noted 20th-century British psychiatrist, author and teacher helps answer this question for us and, at the same time, points us in the new direction our search must take if we hope to come upon the lasting sense of wholeness for which we long.

Man has inner necessities; his emotional life is not satisfied by outer things. His organization is not only to be explained in terms of adaptation to outer life. He needs ideas to give meaning to his existence. There is that in him that can grow and develop—some further state of himself—not lying in ‘tomorrow,’ but above him.

None are immune to the disconcerting touch of this celestial longing that beckons to us from somewhere above us. The only real question is this: are we able to see that whatever the nature of this celestial longing within us—that secret level of ourselves that sends us on a search to realize the truth of ourselves—it must be one and the same as whatever it asks us to find?

If we can even suspect this grand possibility, then we are that much closer to

understanding what all of the wise ones before us have been trying to tell us all along: what we long for, longs for us. The same invisible presence that permeates our being, whose disturbance in our soul is the secret source of our discontent with our present answers to life, awaits us now—within ourselves—just as it has always done, and always will.

The Masters Speak of the Search

Do not be under the delusion that God is somewhere and you have to search for Him; God is in you.

—Atharva Veda (1000–1200 BCE, India)

Whoso bendeth himself shall be straightened. Whoso emptieth himself shall be filled. Whoso weareth himself away shall be renewed. Whoso humbleth himself shall be exalted. Whoso exalteth himself shall be abased. Therefore doth the Sage cling to simplicity.

—Lao Tzu (ca. 570–490 BCE, China)

Those whose minds are attracted to my invisible nature have a great labor to encounter, because an invisible path is difficult to be found by corporal beings.

—Bhagavad Gita (500–200 BCE, India)

Glory be to God who has not given to his creatures any way to attain knowledge of him except by means of their helplessness and their hopelessness of ever reaching such attainment.

—Abu Bakr as-Siddiq (573–634, Mecca, Saudi Arabia)

Settle yourself in solitude, and you will come upon Him in yourself.

—St. Teresa (1515–1582, Spain)

THE SACRED

All of us know what it's like to be dogged by parts of us that want to drag us down. Call it what you will: some compulsion or obsession seems to follow us into all our relationships, only to wreck them in one way or another. We struggle as best we can to free ourselves from these dark states but invariably find ourselves short of the mark. Slowly but surely, one thing becomes clear: we start to see that calling upon who and what we have been to save us from our suffering is like asking a windstorm to pile our autumn leaves. So, without giving up, we begin to open our eyes to the truth of our condition and, somewhere in the midst of our misery, we suddenly see our lives in a new kind of light. In this new awareness, a whole new order of self-understanding dawns; and, as it does, our old dark sense of self departs, taking its suffering along with it.

In these healing moments, where we seem to awaken from a bad dream, there comes a new understanding of something we've always known, but had somehow forgotten! Revelations like these can mean only one thing: all that we need to know to grow beyond who we currently are is already a part of our true nature. English poet and playwright, T.S. Eliot, summarizes this idea for us:

We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started, and know the place for the first time.

In the first two sections of this book, we learned that in spite of the many differences that seem to exist between peoples the world over – regardless of culture, tradition, environment, heredity – there is but one seeker, one search, and one sacred object of our desire. We now approach the greatest mystery of all, which the next section intends to illuminate beyond any shadow of doubt.

The celestial source of this sacred being doesn't just live within us; we are, in fact, one with it. Our true self is as much a part of its everlasting light as are the rays of the setting sun one with the ocean upon which they dance in delight.

The Masters Speak of the Sacred

To those who awake, there is one world in common, but to those who are asleep, each is withdrawn to a private world of his own.

—Heraclitus (535-475 BCE)

God is love and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

—1 John 4:16 (ca. 90)

Whoever knows himself knows God.

—Muhammad (ca 570/71-672)

The eye with which I see God is the same eye with which God sees me.

—Meister Eckhart (1260-ca. 1327)

You never enjoy the world aright, till the Sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens, and crowned with the stars: and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world, and more than so, because men are in it who are every one sole heirs as well as you.

—Thomas Traherne (1636-1674)

To the Reader

If you have been moved by the material in this Abridged Version of Guy Finley's *The Seeker, The Search, The Sacred*, you will find even more inspirational messages in the complete version of the book. Each of the three major sections of the full book contain between 80 to 100 related quotations, along with powerful expositions by the author that round out the whole story of our common celestial bond in a way never before presented.

A portion of the proceeds from every book sold will be donated by the author, his publisher, and the author's nonprofit Life of Learning Foundation to a select group of nonprofit organizations that are helping to heal the world. When you purchase *The Seeker, The Search, The Sacred* you will receive a free 60-minute DVD by Guy Finley entitled *The Four Fundamental Principles of Spiritual Freedom*. Weiser Books is making a generous discount available for study groups or book clubs. Contact Life of Learning at 541-476-1200 for details. Public libraries: request a free copy at onejourney.net/contact

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Guy Finley lives and teaches in southern Oregon, where he is founder and director of nonprofit Life of Learning Foundation, a world-renowned school of self-realization. He has helped individuals find a life of uncompromised freedom and enduring fulfillment for thirty years. A modern-day master, Guy Finley is the best-selling author of more than forty books and unique audio albums, including *The Courage to be Free, The Essential Laws of Fearless Living, Let Go and Live in the Now*, and *The Secret of Letting Go*. He regularly conducts workshops and intensives at the Omega Institute and other major spiritual centers. His teachings reach millions via radio, internet, and his free newsletter.