

**The Golden Key**  
**by Emmet Fox (1886-1951)**  
**1931**

This short essay, just 976 words, is a classic of the American New Thought movement (though Emmet Fox was an Irishman). I include it in our course because it is a perfect example of the practical use of the 180° principle, a principle foundational to the highest teachings of the great religions. The principle is: Turn your back on the world and its problems and realize that only God is real and is here for you.

Fox himself put the principles this way (in his book *The Sermon on the Mount*, 1934):

God is the only power, and . . . evil is insubstantial; . . . we form our own destiny by our thoughts and our beliefs; . . . conditions do not matter when we pray; . . . time and space and matter are human illusions; . . . there is a solution to every problem; . . . man is the child of God, and God is perfect good.

Scientific prayer will enable you to get yourself or anyone else, out of any difficulty. It is the golden key to harmony and happiness.

To those who have no acquaintance with the mightiest power in existence, this may appear to be a rash claim, but it needs only a fair trial to prove that, without a shadow of doubt, it is a just one. You need take no one's word for it, and you should not. Simply try it for yourself. God is omnipotent, and we are God's image and likeness and have dominion over all things. This is the inspired teaching, and it is intended to be taken literally, at its face value. The ability to draw on this power is not the special prerogative of the mystic or the saint, as is so often supposed, or even of the highly trained practitioner. Everyone has this ability. Whoever you are, wherever you may be, the golden key to harmony is in your hand now. This is because in scientific prayer it is God who works, and not you, and so your particular limitations or weaknesses are of no account in the process. You are only the channel through which the divine action takes place, and your treatment will be just the getting of yourself out of the way.

Beginners often get startling results the first time, for all that is essential is to have an open mind and sufficient faith to try the experiment. Apart from that, you may hold any views on religion, or none.

As for the actual method of working, like all fundamental things, it is simplicity itself. All you have to do is this:

Stop thinking about the difficulty, whatever it is, and think about God instead.

This is the complete rule, and if only you will do this, the trouble, whatever it is, will disappear. It makes no difference what kind of trouble it is. It may be a big thing or a little thing: it may concern health, finance, a lawsuit, a quarrel, an accident, or anything else conceivable: but whatever it is, stop thinking about it and think of God instead—that is all you have to do.

It could not be simpler, could it? God could scarcely have made it simpler, and yet it never fails to work when given a fair trial.

Do not try to form a picture of God, which is impossible. Work by rehearsing anything or everything that you know about God. God is wisdom, truth, inconceivable love. God is present everywhere, has infinite power, knows everything, and so on. It matters not how well you may think you understand these things: go over them repeatedly.

But you must stop thinking of the trouble, whatever it is. The rule is, to think about God. If you are thinking about your difficulty, you are not thinking about God. To be continually glancing over your shoulder in order to see how matters are progressing is fatal, because it is thinking of the trouble, and you must think of God and nothing else. Your object is to drive the thought of the difficulty out of your consciousness, for a few moments at least, substituting for it the thought of God. This is the crux of the whole thing. If you can become so absorbed in this consideration of the spiritual world that you forget for a while about the difficulty, you will find that you are safely and comfortably out of your difficulty—that your demonstration is made.

In order to "golden key" a troublesome person or a difficult situation, think. "Now I am going to 'golden key' John, or Mary. or that threatened danger": then proceed to drive all thought of John, or Mary, or the danger out of your mind, replacing it with the thought of God.

By working in this way about a person, you are not seeking to influence his conduct in any way, except that you prevent him from injuring or annoying you, and you do him nothing but good. Thereafter, he is certain to be in some degree a better, wiser, and more spiritual person, just because you have "golden keyed" him. A pending lawsuit or other difficulty would probably fade out harmlessly without coming to a crisis, justice being done to all parties concerned.

If you find that you can do this very quickly, you may repeat the operation several times a day with intervals between. Be sure, however, each time you have done it, that you drop all thought of the matter until the next time. This is important.

We have said that the golden key is simple, and so it is, but of course it is not always easy to turn. If you are very frightened or worried, at first it may be difficult to get your thoughts away from material things. But by constantly repeating a statement of absolute Truth, such as: There is no power but God; I am the child of God, filled and surrounded by the perfect peace of God; God is love; God is guiding me now; or, perhaps best and simplest of all: God is with me. However mechanical or trite it may seem, you will soon find that the treatment has begun to "take," and that your mind is clearing. Do not struggle violently; be quiet, but insistent. Each time you find your attention wandering, switch it back to God.

Do not try to think in advance what the solution to your difficulty will be. This is called "outlining" and will only delay the demonstration. Leave the question of ways and means to God. You want to get out of your difficulty that is sufficient. You do your half, and God will never fail to do God's. "Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21)