

This transcript is from personal papers of Evelyn Underhill archived at King's College London, College Archives. Reference Code GB0100 KCLCA K/PP75. "Papers of Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941)". It is a list of her goals for leading a Christian life, to be practiced by herself.

Rule. Christmas 1921

- 1) Invisible religion shall be the touchstone for all external practices, which should (on the long run) steady and feed it. Those that permanently disturb it to be discarded.
- 2) Active work. Get gently interested in the poor. 2 afternoons weekly to be given to this and take priority of everything except strict family duties. This work must be entered into and persevered with the object of developing more homely and human religious dispositions: and the spirit derived from it spread over the whole week. Aim at a reasonable devotedness as well as devotion, with sufficient variety and no feverishness and above all much self-oblivion; dropping introspection and thoughts of self and turning to thoughts and acts for others and humble aspirations to God.
- 3) Direction. No new cases to be taken before Easter if avoidable.
- 4) Detachment. Affection for particular persons not to be directly checked, but new relationships only to be entered on very slowly and deliberately. Plainfulness [sic] passion and jealousy to be dealt with and dropped, not by direct fighting but by gently turning to God or thoughts of serenely loving Saints. Thus detachment will be practiced within attachment, and material and occasion for detachment will be kept going.
- 5) Prayer. A fixed time must be given to daily deliberate prayer, but it must not be long or vary much whether in consolation or desolation. The kind and degree shall be that which most helps to love work and suffer, and both humbles and braces. But the spirit of inarticulate prayer should more and more penetrate all working hours.

Mental Dispositions

- 6) Seek to acquire the Catholic mind. Become less of a judge of the worth of Christo-centric devotion, practicing theocentric devotion as a way not the way, and trying to balance it by incarnational thoughts and sympathies.
- 7) Try to set about humble full definite development of principle of God found in history, here-and-now, not by sheer ascents, and make this part of the rock of personal faith. Realize that all powerful and personal religion requires some historical happenings as essential to its completeness. Strive to eliminate a merely philosophically based theism in favor of real incarnationalism [sic].
- 8) Keep in mind the fact that since spiritual perception without some sense of stimulation is a psychological impossibility, there is no exclusively spiritual apprehension of spiritual reality. Human and historical contacts are essential to its fullness. Entirely mystical and purely non-successive religion is a dangerous abstraction from reality.

Further religiously, the human soul requires God's own descent to and into it – the whole way – in human and homely forms and ways, rather than its ascent to Him. This alone gives a religion sufficiently homely and humbling. This means God manifested in history, grades of Divine self-revelation. At the apex, difference of degree issuing in difference of kind, we reach the deepest and fullest self-abasement of God as expressed in the Incarnation and the Cross. Full religion demands a temper of mind able to grasp and assimilate this.

- 9) Spiritual dispositions. Two hostile feelings at present co-exist in my soul: namely the purely mystical and philosophic and the Catholic-incarnational. Must try in various degrees and ways to practice and encourage thought and expression of the second current. The oscillation and doubleness [sic] at

present weakening my religious life must be resolved, the two currents gradually being interwoven with special care given to the incarnational and sacramental because it has been specially starved. Accustom myself to retreat from levels of merely theological reasoning into the deeper levels of the soul and hold as much as possible in prayer, thoughts and affections as to God found in Christ.

- 10) All dependent on me, and specially N, have an unalienable right to my consideration and to be as much sustained and little pained by me as possible. No mere religious preferences, or getting greater help or spiritual comfort from particular practices can justify inflicting pain on them. On the other hand, conscience takes priority of all such obligations. Must hold myself ready to obey the real inward pressure whatever it demands. "Amiable naturalism" must be resolved in "the ocean of supernatural love of the waiting upon God."

These rules and discriminations to be tested and practiced for 6 months, quietly and steadily, with a disposition to find them true even where uncongenial.
