

ROBERT COLLIER



THE MAGIC WORD

**Robert Collier**

# **The Magic Word**

**Enriched edition.**

*Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Colin Everett*

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# Introduction

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Robert Collier stands among the most read American authors in the New Thought and self-help tradition, known for distilling metaphysical ideas into practical counsel. The Magic Word presents a single-author collection of thirteen short books or essays—The Law of Increase; In the Beginning; Treasure Mapping for Supply; 'Wanted: Rain!'; Catalysts of Power; The First Commandment; The Three Laws of Life; A Prayer for Work; First Causes; Old Man Gravity; Life Begins with Movement; The Key to Power; P-R-A-I-S-E—arranged to foreground his central teaching. It is not a complete works, but a focused gathering of essential texts that trace his enduring preoccupation with supply, causation, and directed faith.

These writings belong primarily to the genres of practical essay and devotional instruction. Collier writes as a teacher rather than a storyteller, though he frequently illustrates an idea with a brief case or parable-like scenario. Readers will encounter compact lessons, prayerful meditations, and stepwise methods intended for daily application. The tone is didactic yet accessible, marked by an emphasis on clarity, repetition for reinforcement, and vivid analogies drawn from everyday work and nature. The pieces can be read individually as self-contained guides, or collectively as a course that moves from first principles to techniques for visualization, affirmation, and disciplined, outward action.

Across the collection, unifying themes recur with deliberate insistence. Collier argues for a lawfulness in life that links inner conviction, spoken word, and persistent effort to outward increase. The 'beginning' is an inner image; 'first causes' precede effects; praise aligns the

individual with a higher order; movement initiates channels for supply. He elaborates a moral framework in which motive, gratitude, and obedience to what he calls law shape results. Without resorting to abstraction, he insists on practice: hold the idea, affirm the good, work the plan. The result is a consistent ethic of responsibility, expectancy, and cooperative faith.

In this arrangement each piece marks a step in the argument. The Law of Increase considers attitudes that multiply good. In the Beginning returns to the origination of aims. Treasure Mapping for Supply sets objectives in concrete form. 'Wanted: Rain!' applies focused intention to a specific need. Catalysts of Power examines conditions that intensify results. The First Commandment sets priorities of allegiance. The Three Laws of Life outlines governing rules. A Prayer for Work joins devotion to daily labor. First Causes treats the primacy of causation. Old Man Gravity offers a natural-law analogy. Life Begins with Movement stresses action. The Key to Power summarizes access. P-R-A-I-S-E closes with disciplined gratitude.

Collier wrote for a broad readership seeking workable principles during times of change. He emerged in the early twentieth century, and his titles found wide circulation through popular publishing. His reputation rests on a distinctive blend of metaphysical conviction and pragmatic instruction, expressed in plain, persuasive prose. He addresses household, shop, and office with equal seriousness, translating spiritual precepts into procedures that can be tested in ordinary affairs. The present collection reflects that dual commitment: the texts aim to lift thought while also prescribing concrete steps by which intention becomes plan and plan becomes sustained endeavor.

Collier's stylistic signature is economical, example-rich argumentation that asks for repetition, visualization, and steady application. He avoids technical vocabulary in favor of metaphors—maps, keys, laws, gravity—that make

abstract tenets tangible. His long practice of addressing a broad audience sharpened his sensitivity to readers, lending the essays an invitational rhythm that has kept them in steady use among students of personal development. Concepts presented here continue to recur in contemporary coaching, goal-setting, and prosperity teachings, where visualization, gratitude practices, and law-based thinking remain central. The durability of these pages lies in their balance of promise with responsibility and work.

This edition offers a coherent path through Collier's essential teachings without attempting exhaustive coverage of his output. The choices favor texts that show his method from premise to practice, culminating in the discipline named in the title. Readers may approach the pieces as standalone meditations or as successive lessons; either way, the emphasis remains on internalizing principle and translating it into orderly action. The arrangement preserves the integrity of each text while creating a cumulative momentum. Presented together, these works display an author who treats faith as a usable power, insists on ethical ends, and trusts the law of increase to answer steadfast effort.

# Historical Context

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Robert Collier (1885–1950), a copywriter active in the New York publishing world, wrote amid the consolidation of the New Thought movement that had spread from New England across urban America since the 1880s. Drawing on antecedents like Phineas P. Quimby, Emma Curtis Hopkins, and the Edinburgh Lectures of Thomas Troward (1904), Collier blended metaphysical optimism with practical counsel. *The Magic Word*, with pieces such as *The Law of Increase* and *The Key to Power*, reflects a milieu in which prosperity teachings sought to reconcile spiritual causation with modern ambition. Readers in hubs like New York and Chicago encountered these ideas through magazines, lectures, and mail-order courses.

At the same time, popular psychology reshaped self-help. William James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) legitimized individual mystical states, while Émile Coué's autosuggestion tours in the United States in 1923 made affirmations a mass phenomenon. Newspaper coverage of psychoanalysis and habit formation diffused terms like subconscious and conditioning into everyday speech. Essays such as *Catalysts of Power*, *The Three Laws of Life*, and *The Key to Power* adopt that vocabulary, urging visualization and suggestion as tools. This convergence helped Collier's work appear scientific to contemporaries, positioning metaphysical claims within the era's fascination with mental efficiency and applied psychology in business and education.

Collier's career in advertising dovetailed with the expansion of mass mail-order culture after Parcel Post began in 1913. By the 1920s, firms in New York, Chicago, and

Kansas City reached national audiences via direct mail, as Sears and other catalog companies normalized buying by post. Collier's Robert Collier Letter Book (1931) codified persuasive techniques that also inflect *The Law of Increase* and *Treasure Mapping for Supply*, which frame desire as a blueprint one can draft and circulate. The same networks that shipped merchandise carried inspirational literature, enabling his essays to find readers beyond metropolitan bookstores and to promise practical, measurable results.

After the 1929 crash and the bank crises of 1930–1933, unemployment in the United States peaked near 25 percent in early 1933. In that context, pieces like *A Prayer for Work* and *P-R-A-I-S-E* addressed immediate anxieties about livelihood and morale. New Deal relief and public-works campaigns coexisted with local church drives for mutual aid, creating an audience receptive to inner discipline paired with hopeful expectancy. Collier's emphasis on gratitude and obedience to first principles, echoed in *The First Commandment*, aligned with a broader search for stability. His practical tone made metaphysical counsel acceptable to readers battered by economic volatility.

Environmental crisis further shaped reception. The Great Plains drought and Dust Bowl years from 1930 to 1936, capped by the 14 April 1935 Black Sunday dust storm, spawned civic prayer days and debates over human agency in weather. Earlier rainmaking efforts, such as Charles Hatfield's controversial 1916 San Diego experiment, remained in public memory. Within that atmosphere, a title like *Wanted: Rain!* resonated as a commentary on collective intention and stewardship. By linking spiritual focus with material outcomes, Collier's approach spoke to farmers, migrants, and urban supporters following relief news from Kansas, Oklahoma, and the Texas Panhandle during widely reported dust emergencies.

Popular science also furnished metaphors. The 1919 Eddington eclipse that confirmed Einstein's relativity, the

radio boom of the 1920s, and the 1939 New York World's Fair heightened faith in invisible forces and orderly laws. Essays such as *Old Man Gravity* and *Life Begins with Movement* borrow the prestige of physics and physiology to frame mental causation as lawful and dynamic. The physical culture movement, popularized by Bernarr Macfadden's magazines since 1899, encouraged readers to equate bodily vigor with moral and economic power. Collier's appropriation of scientific idioms lent his counsel a modern gloss that differentiated it from purely devotional tracts.

Religious language remained central. New Thought preachers like Emmet Fox, whose *Sermon on the Mount* lectures drew crowds in New York in the mid-1930s, modeled Bible-centered metaphysical exegesis. Unity's *Daily Word*, launched in Kansas City in 1924, circulated affirmations nationwide, while Ernest Holmes's *Science of Mind* (1926) offered a systematic theology of mental causation. Against that backdrop, *First Causes*, *The First Commandment*, and *P-R-A-I-S-E* situate success within covenantal obedience and devotional practice. Collier's blend of scripture and technique appealed to middle-class readers seeking compatibility between Protestant heritage and modern self-mastery, even as some clergy criticized prosperity themes as theologically thin.

By the 1940s, Collier's essays were read alongside success literature by Napoleon Hill (*Think and Grow Rich*, 1937) and, soon after his death in 1950, Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* (1952). Wartime mobilization and the post-1944 GI Bill expanded aspirations for advancement, sustaining demand for programs that linked mindset and opportunity. Mail-order courses, book clubs, and correspondence schools extended the reach of pieces like *The Key to Power* and *Treasure Mapping for Supply*. Together the collection's recurring themes—law, praise, movement, first causes—trace an interwar synthesis of metaphysics, psychology, and commerce that shaped

mid-century American ideas about personal supply and civic optimism.

# **Synopsis (Selection)**

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### **First Principles (In the Beginning; First Causes; The First Commandment)**

These essays lay the metaphysical groundwork, proposing that creation begins in thought and a singular First Cause, and that prosperity follows conscious alignment with it.

The tone is quietly authoritative and devotional, urging undivided loyalty to the highest ideal as the organizing center of life.

### **Laws and Movement (The Three Laws of Life; Old Man Gravity; Life Begins with Movement)**

These chapters frame life as governed by dependable laws and rhythms, using natural analogies like gravity to argue that mind and action operate under similar order.

The counsel is assured and kinetic, emphasizing that inner conviction must be paired with movement—a recurrent Collier motif linking lawlike certainty with practical momentum.

### **Praise and Increase (The Law of Increase; P-R-A-I-S-E)**

Collier argues that praise and gratitude amplify whatever they touch, serving as the mechanism of increase in affairs and outlook.

The voice is exhortative and formula-driven, turning attitude into a repeatable practice and highlighting his stylistic reliance on rhythmic emphasis and concise rules.

## **Power and Its Accelerants (The Key to Power; Catalysts of Power)**

These pieces name the inner switch—clarity of desire, faith, and sustained attention—that unlocks personal power and directs results.

With a coaching, experimental tone, they offer small practices as accelerants, reflecting a signature blend of metaphysical assurance and hands-on technique.

## **Practical Applications of Visualization and Prayer (Treasure Mapping for Supply; A Prayer for Work; Wanted: Rain!)**

These applied chapters translate belief into steps: mapping a desired supply, formulating prayer for work, or focusing intention for needed conditions like rain.

The mood is instructional and hopeful, modeling the recurring sequence of vivid imagery, praise, and cooperative action to carry ideas into tangible effects.

# **The Magic Word**

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The Law of Increase  
In the Beginning  
Treasure Mapping for Supply  
“Wanted: Rain!”  
Catalysts of Power  
The First Commandment  
The Three Laws of Life  
A Prayer for Work  
First Causes  
Old Man Gravity  
Life Begins with Movement  
The Key to Power  
P-R-A-I-S-E

# THE LAW OF INCREASE

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“I am Success, though hungry, cold, ill-clad,  
I wander for a while, I smile and say,  
‘It is but for a time, I shall be glad  
Tomorrow, for good fortune comes my way.  
God is my Father, He has wealth untold,  
His wealth is mine—health, happiness and gold.’ ”

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox

In a pamphlet written by Don Blanding, he tells of a time during the trying years of the Great Depression, when he found himself financially, mentally and physically “broke.” He was suffering from insomnia and from a physical lethargy amounting almost to paralysis. Worst of all, he had a bad case of “self-pity,” and he felt that the self-pity was fully justified.

He was staying at a small Art Colony (on credit), trying to rebuild his wrecked life and wretched body. Among those at the Colony was Mike, an Hawaiian boy. Mike seemed to be always cheerful. Mike seemed to be always prosperous. And, naturally, Blanding wondered why. For Mike, when he had known him before, had been blessed with few of this world’s goods.

So one day he asked Mike what good fairy had waved her wand over him and turned all that he touched into *gold*.

For answer, Mike pointed to a string of letters he had pasted over his bed—“L-I-D-G-T-T-F-T-A-T-I-M.”

Blanding read them, but could make no sense out of them. “What are they, the ‘Open, Sesame’ to the Treasure Cave?”

"They have been the 'Open, Sesame' for me," Mike told him, and went on to explain how they had helped him. It seems that Mike, too, had experienced his ups and downs, but in the course of one of his "downs," he had happened upon a teacher who showed him the power of PRAISE and THANKFULNESS.

"There is an inherent law of mind," says Charles Fillmore, "that we INCREASE whatever we PRAISE. The whole of creation responds to praise, and is glad. Animal trainers pet and reward their charges with delicacies for acts of obedience; children glow with joy and gladness when they are praised. Even vegetation grows better for those who love it. We can praise our own ability, and the very brain cells will expand and increase in capacity and intelligence, when we speak words of encouragement and appreciation to them."

God gave you dominion over the earth. Everything is your servant, but remember it is said in the Scriptures that God brought every beast and fowl to Adam, *to see what he would call them*. You are like Adam in this, that you can give to everything and everybody with whom you come in contact the name you like. You can call them good or bad. And whatever you call them, that is what they will be—good servants or evil. You can praise or curse them, and as you do, so will they be to you.

There is one unfailing Law of Increase—"Whatever is praised and blessed, MULTIPLIES!" Count your blessings and they increase. If you are in need of supply, start in now to praise every small piece of money that comes to you, blessing it as a symbol of God's abundance and love. Salute the Divinity represented by it. Bless Him and name Him Infinite and Abundant Supply. You will be surprised how soon that small piece of money will increase to many pieces. Take God into your business. Bless your store, bless every one that works for you, each customer that comes in. Know that

they represent the Divinity called Abundance, so bless them as such.

If you are working for someone else and want a better job or more pay, start by BLESSING and being THANKFUL *for what you have*. Bless the work you are doing, be thankful for every opportunity it gives you to acquire greater skill or ability or to serve others. Bless the money you earn, no matter how little it may be. Be so thankful to God for it that you can give a small "Thank Offering" from it to someone in greater need than yourself.

Suppose the Boss does seem unappreciative and hard. Bless him just the same. Be thankful for the opportunity to SERVE faithfully, no matter how small the immediate reward may seem to be. Give your best, give it cheerfully, gladly, thankfully, and you will be amazed how quickly the INCREASE will come to you—not necessarily from your immediate boss, but from the Big Boss over all.

I remember reading a letter from a woman in the drought belt in which she said that they, unlike most of their neighbors, had an abundant supply of water, and excellent crops. "When my husband plows a field," she writes, "I ask God to bless each furrow. Each seed that goes into the seeder is blessed, and the realization held that it will produce abundantly according to His righteous law. Our neighbors marveled at the abundance of hay that we cut this year. The hay was sold before the third cutting was put up.

"Each day, in the silence, I put the ranch 'Lovingly in the hands of the Father.' I ask God to bless everybody that comes in contact with the ranch."

Few realize the power of praise and blessing. Praise may be called the great liberator. You remember the story of Paul and Silas. They lay in jail bound with chains, but they did not despair. They rejoiced and sang hymns of praise, and lo, the very walls were shaken down and they were set free.

Praise always magnifies [1q]. When we praise God and then look about us and praise His invisible presence in all that we see, we find that the good is so magnified that much becomes evident that we ordinarily fail to see. Running through all of Jesus Christ's acts as well as His teachings we find the glowing element of praise. When He looked at five loaves and two small fishes and realized that He had a multitude to feed, His first thought was a thought of praise. "And looking up to heaven, he blessed."

Go back over the Old Testament and see how often you are adjured to "Praise the Lord and be thankful, that THEN shall the earth yield her increase." Probably no life chronicled in the Scriptures was more beset with trials and dangers than that of King David. And what was his remedy? What brought him through all tribulations to power and riches? Just read the Psalms of David and you will see.

"Jehovah reigneth; let the earth rejoice;  
Let the multitude of isles be glad.  
Bless Jehovah, O my soul;  
And all that is within me, *bless* his holy name . . .  
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;  
Who healeth all thy diseases."

"If anyone could tell you the shortest, surest way to all happiness and all perfection," wrote William Law, "he must tell you to make it a rule to yourself to thank and praise God for everything that happens to you. For it is certain that whatever seeming calamity happens to you, if you thank and praise God for it, you turn it into a blessing. Could you therefore work miracles, you could not do more for yourself than by this thankful spirit; for it turns all that it touches into happiness."

How then can YOU increase your supply? How can you get more of riches and happiness and every good thing of life? In the same way as the Wise Men and the Prophets of

old. In the same way that Jesus twice fed the multitudes. In the same way that He filled the disciples' nets to overflowing with fish, after they had labored all night and caught nothing.

By EXPANDING what you have! And the way to expand is through love, through praise and thanksgiving —through saluting the Divinity in it, and naming it Infinite and Abundant Supply.

Throughout the Bible we are told—"In everything by prayer and supplication WITH THANKSGIVING let your requests be made unto God." Again and again the root of inspiration and attainment is stressed. *Rejoice, be glad, praise, give thanks!*

And that was what our Hawaiian boy had done. That was the secret of his prosperity and success. The Talisman he had pasted over his bed meant—"Lord, I do give Thee thanks for the abundance that is mine." Every time he looked upon it, he repeated those words of thankfulness. The happy ending lies in the fact that these words of praise and thanksgiving proved to be as potent a talisman for Don Blanding as they had for Mike, the Hawaiian.

"Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth Me," sang the Psalmist of old. And it is as true today as it was thousands of years ago. Praise, thankfulness, understanding—these three supply the golden key to anything of good you may desire of life.

In "Think What You Want" magazine, some time ago, H. W. Alexander told how praise helps. "Sincere praise is money in your pocket," he said. "It is a spiritual and moral uplift. It is a tonic to the giver and the receiver. It rebounds to both a thousand times. I know a company whose sales during the depression went from \$2,600,000 a year to \$8,000,000. Praise was the inspiration.

"In a divorce court not so long ago was recorded the story of a man who from a laborer's job climbed to the Presidency of his business. A friend asked him why he quit