

## December 21, 1986

- *Feeling God's presence*
- *Love is the nutrient for spiritual growth*
- *Positive and negative feelings have an effect on all souls*
- *The role of compassion in love and prayer*
- *Pray for peace*

God joins your group in a very personal way this evening. Therefore God responds to all of your needs, whether voiced or unvoiced. You are all here because you seek something—knowledge, insight, peace, inspiration, direction in life, answers to specific concerns. Whatever the reason, you are joined together because of the commonality of searching. What you ultimately look for is a stronger perception of God in your daily living. It is not the momentary flash of inspiration which is so often forgotten at a later time. It is ultimately the sustaining presence which you really seek.

God's presence is felt in so many different ways, and each of you can sense that presence through various means, through different manifestations, if you will. As you know, for some it is a feeling of peace. For another it is a lessening of frustration, and for yet another it may be a clear sense of where to proceed from here. Each of you at some points in your lives has sensed that somehow God was present. But a momentary recognition is frequently not sufficient to sustain your conviction of God's constant presence.

Children are aware of the presence of their mother or father at frequent times during the day. But when a parent is not visibly present and cannot be heard, a young child will not sense the reality that the parent is still nearby. The child then proceeds to act in a manner which brings the loved one back into sight or into hearing range.

Each of you, in a way, is still a child in the sense of spiritual awareness. When God is not manifest frequently, you may tend to feel alone—not rejected, but somehow untethered from the stability which is sought. One of the central purposes in life is to develop the security to internalize the truth that God is indeed a part of each of your lives as individuals, whether you sense that presence or not.

You cannot be expected daily, every hour, to contemplate how God is a part of what you are doing. It certainly would be asking far too much of anyone who is living a normal life of professional and personal activities. A balance is required to live life as God would intend it. There are times when you think of God, and there are times when God is outside your thoughts. This is, of course, perfectly acceptable to God, understandable, and therefore it should be acceptable to you. Life is not to be lived in monastic concentration. Life is to be lived dealing with the issues which come up upon everyone.

Life means, of course, being elated at times. It also means being depressed, discouraged, frustrated, angry, jealous, and impatient. All of that is a part of life. In the

December 21, 1986

end, the spiritual growth which you achieve through human life can only be effected by your frequent contact with those elements. If life were only comprised of joy and all things positive, there would be no challenge to grow.

The question of whether one is presented with difficult challenges as a means of fostering growth is certainly valid. But we must assert here that God does not present humankind with difficulties as a way of having one learn. We have spoken to some degree of the randomness of life. That randomness includes both positive and negative aspects. One learns actually from both. One gains strength through meeting difficulty, but one is often able to reflect upon those difficult times when life is somewhat less burdensome and then recognize the growth which has taken place.

It was mentioned this evening and bears further support that there is no race to be won for any of you. It is not a matter of who grows faster. It is not important whether one grows quickly or slowly. It is only important that growth takes place. That is why you live your lives, in order to grow spiritually. Love is the greatest nutrient for that growth.

The presence of love is enhanced both through adversity and through the overcoming of adversity. Love is a kind of by-product of living life. It is by the exercise of that by-product, the exercise of love, that real growth is achieved. Your lives, therefore, take shape through the means by which you exercise love.

There are many who gain great insight into the breadth and depth of love as a result of suffering which they have experienced. For others, love and the understanding of love are enhanced as they contemplate the suffering of others, though they themselves may not suffer. Their response to that contemplation of the suffering of others is the exercising of love.

Life is to be lived. It is never to be regarded cheaply. It is never to be considered meaningless, hopeless, or useless. You were given life because of the opportunities that life presents you. Life is not an equal division of joy and sadness. Some experience more of one and less of another. It is not important what this division is. It is not important that one suffers more or less than another. It is important only to consider how one approaches the life one has.

This time of year is a difficult time for many. It is difficult for those who are alone, but it should be difficult for those who seemingly are richly blessed and yet turn their concerns to those who are suffering. The reason it should be difficult is because of an awareness of the disparity in the nature of the lives of humankind. If a king is deeply aware of the suffering of the less fortunate in his domain, his thoughts are guided toward the great gulf that separates them. That gulf should be disturbing. It should be unsettling, and it should draw the king to a greater compassion for those who do not share in his bounty.

The most dangerous attitude humans can accept is complacency. If you are to work for peace within and for peace in the world, you cannot take the position that there are just some things beyond your control. You must become involved. That involvement

December 21, 1986

in lessening the burden of others can only be motivated by a conviction of love and compassion. Love without compassion is meaningless. Love must be giving. It must be caring. It must be doing what needs to be done to support and elevate the soul of another.

You may not find an easy task of elevating the soul of one who lives thousands of miles away whom you have never met. That is not what we ask you to do. Each of you knows of another person who needs your compassion, who needs your caring not just verbally but prayerfully and personally. The compassion which motivates you toward action raises the spiritual intensity in the world, even when you are drawn to helping one other person. Because you are all interconnected spiritually, what is done for the benefit of one is done for the benefit of all. Negative feelings affect not only one soul but all souls.

Your responsibilities in life of elevating and strengthening the souls of all of human beings are realized as you strengthen the spiritual light of one other person. The task, you see, is not beyond your reach. It is your choice to become committed to reaching out with compassion, being the hand of God, being the eye of God, being the heart of God—that you are empowered to do, each of you.

It is so easy to consider what we are empowered to share with you as platitudes, as nice concepts, but having little reality to them. It is more difficult to take what you learn and really apply it. Often you have asked in discussions, "How can I do this? How can I change the world? How can I make a difference? How can I really help another?" What is common to all of these questions is "how." There is only one answer that is applicable to all of these questions and that is, "First, by prayer."

We keep returning to the impact of prayer upon your daily lives and upon the world at large because there is no influence in life more powerful than prayer. It extends far beyond anything you can imagine. After we became adjusted to our new spiritual life, all of us were nearly blinded by the reality of what prayer can do. We do not say this lightly. We are not merely presenting a metaphor. We were blinded by that awareness because of the intense light emanating from prayer. If we had known in human form what prayer can do, we would have been tempted to dominate all of our time in prayer. You would not believe what influence it has.

When you pray for another, you are indeed helping that person in a means far greater than anything else you could do. You pray for a person out of compassion. You pray for a group of people who may be suffering out of compassion. It is not really an automatic activity. True prayer is motivated by this compassion and as such, has far reaching results.

What can you pray for which offers such potential? Above all, you pray for peace. You pray for the peace of an individual or a group of people. You pray for your own peace—emotional peace, physical peace.

December 21, 1986

When one prays for healing, one is really praying for the elimination of suffering. That's compassion. It is natural to pray for the healing of another through the motivation of wanting to see the other returned to you, to health, to perfection perhaps. But in the end, healing is really the establishment of peace within. If someone is terminally ill and ultimately achieves an inner peace, that person is indeed healed. In a way, that individual is often of greater health than the one who offered the prayer.

Pray for peace therefore. It makes a difference. It brings healing. It brings people together. It fosters understanding. It is an exercise in compassionate love. It is the fulfillment of God's wish for all souls. The development of the spirit through the many stages can be seen as a refinement, as a perfection of inner peace and its expression through compassionate love.

As we develop on this sphere, we experience greater peace—not perfect peace, but greater. We then move on to another level of development where the peace becomes deeper and with it an intensified love for everything. Only when one is finally in complete unity with God is total inner peace achieved, which is everlasting.

Reach out to each other in your prayers for peace. Remember those who are full of turmoil, and remind yourselves of the opportunity you have for alleviating that turmoil, bringing another that much closer to peace.

We receive God's peace and reflect it upon each of your souls. Our prayers are for the continued development of peace within you, for the continued exercise of love. We stand with you constantly, whatever you may be doing, offering God's peace. It is there for you to accept whenever you turn to God.

We rejoice in your union together as we, your guides, are also co-joined, and we bless you in God's name with God's peace and compassionate love.

Amen.