

June 4, 1984

- *Relinquish control of your life*
- *Accept God's response to prayer*
- *God acts through people*

God is with each of you in your lives as you are alone and as you interact with others. God's presence in your lives is not by choice—it is a gift to all beings.

As we have said so often, you cannot escape God's presence. You cannot escape God through thoughts or actions. There has never been anyone in existence who has existed outside of God's presence, but your response to God is so varied. It differs among all people. There are many who know nothing about God. There are many who know about God but do not know God. There are many who know about God and reject God. There are many who know about God, know God, and embrace God. It is a sad fact that those in the final category are so few in number.

Your responsibilities in life are not limited to knowing about God. You are being challenged to embrace God. You are being asked to willingly incorporate your awareness of God in absolutely all that you do. This is an exceedingly difficult challenge for it holds within it a kind of threat, one might say, a threat to a sense of security. It may seem illogical to state that there is a threat to the sense of security in embracing God, for isn't it God who provides that security? Yes, it is true God provides the security, but it is very much a threat to many to be willing to let go of even a portion of control over their lives, let alone the lives of others. Each of you has been taught since childhood that you must obtain and maintain control, most specifically control over your own life.

How often it is said that someone has lost control over their destiny when something tragic occurs. It is so frequently labeled as someone's fault, the implication being that if one had control, the tragedy would not occur. Your society—indeed most, and we emphasize not all societies—places a high premium on the ability to control your own life. But we tell you it is not essential that you control your life for the simple reason you cannot control your life. Only God controls your life. When you seek one direction and your life travels by another path, your sense of frustration or disappointment may be high—indeed a sense of loss—but that is because in actuality you are placing the need for self-control in your life above God's control.

Your lives require a shift in emphasis. For so long you have had control, and despite your ability to steer your own life, you arrive at dead ends and frustrations and anxieties. You cannot adequately control your life in its entirety. Each must therefore be willing to relinquish the need for such dominance by starting to leave some elements in your life to God. This is not difficult to say, but it is an extreme challenge to achieve, for your goals are frequently formed through selfishness, concern for your well-being, material comfort, and other desires, but none of those desires is really centered fully upon God.

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When you turn your life toward God-control rather than self-control, you do not give up any sense of responsibility. We do not suggest that you just toss a coin and whichever way it lands is what you do. What we strongly urge each of you to do is to be willing, through prayer, to embrace God's presence in your life direction. In order to achieve this, you must as you know pray for help. But after such prayer as you may offer, you must be willing to accept what happens as being God's response. Could you for a moment imagine yourselves impatient with God? Of course it is impossible. You may be impatient with what life provides, but you would never say, "Hurry up, God, let's get going. Do it my way." When God responded, you would recognize it and accept it. This is what we ask each of you to do.

You must learn to accept God's response, recognizing that your lives proceed according to God's desires for you when you pray for God's influence. You do not in fact need to pray for God's presence. Some may offer such prayers and yet not actually ask for God's presence but ask for God's influence. There are, of course, many who feel God is not present, really not present unless called for, as one would call another who is somehow distant. As you accept the omnipresence of God extending beyond physical location, you can only accept God's constant presence. Therefore, there is no need to pray that God may somehow come to you as if God were away. You need only pray that God's influence will be in your life and you can be assured of that influence.

You may travel a great distance but will always be in God's light, and if you pray for God's influence to be present, the influence will be there. It is not important where you are, it is only important who you are. It is the quality of your life that counts, as it is the quality of all lives that count. It is not the location.

God acts through people. This we have said so often. When you respond to another, you are responding to God. When you listen to the needs that another expresses, you are listening to God. When you express your own needs, you are being open to God's influence. Whatever happens in life from God never occurs in an inanimate way. God does not simply apply influence in some academic sense. God works through people. People are important. Therefore, you are important because you are God's hands. You are important because you are God's ears. You are important because you are God's eyes. You are important because you are God's heart, and you are important because you are God's tongue. What you say can be God speaking. With prayer this is always so, but you can turn your face from God and speak, and you speak alone. So your words are also a means of working with God.

It is a wonderful opportunity you have living life. We, your guides, also had that opportunity. Some of us were acutely aware of God's presence, and some of us were unaware of the real meaning of God's presence, but we have come to know it through a long time of prayer and reflection. That growth must take place. It takes place whether in the form of earthly life or spiritual life or a combination. However or wherever it

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occurs, it still must take place. You are so fortunate that God has given you all insight into God's presence and a sensitivity in the application of that presence.

We pray for each of you and challenge you to turn life into God-directed and not self-directed activity. We challenge you to serve as the hands and eyes and ears and tongue and heart of God through your interaction with others.

We bless each of you with God's love and warmth, patience and peace.

Amen.