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- *Analogy of spokes in a wheel to differing perceptions of God*
- *The faith and example of Jesus*
- *What it means to be “saved”*

God surrounds each of you and bathes you as always in loving light. All of us who are here rejoice that your circle is so strong at this moment. When each of you approaches God in faith and with an openness to learn and grow, it is so much easier for us to be able to communicate with you and transmit God's direction and love to you.

We are all aware of your concerns for your loved ones, for the wellbeing of your family and your friends. Your loved one who recently passed to our side is with us. She is resting and joyful. Her transition was not a difficult one in the end, and we see her spirit strengthening through her association with those she loves.

Each of you is approaching this evening from different viewpoints. You have arrived at the same point from diverse roads. Even though you are together spiritually, you all have varying degrees of awareness of God in your lives. Your sharing of experiences is but a miniature of what is essential in human life. The variety seems endless and yet, despite those differences, there is a point of unity, that being a recognition of a supreme power, of an influence of love which transcends your individual lives.

Recognized religions also began with such a convergence of differing souls. When a group unites to gain insight, to achieve a deeper understanding, it is unavoidable that such viewpoints that are brought into discussions will carry with them the marks of the individual experiences of each person. Formalized religions, whether they follow strict patterns of worship or adhere to common beliefs, must reflect the differences in viewpoints of all involved. Each of you is aware of the differences that are a part of your communities of faith. The differences are natural. They reflect God's purpose in that they focus upon the importance of unity within a field that is greatly diverse.

The hub of a wheel is more easily recognized when spokes are present converging from many directions. If the wheel is solid, it is more difficult to identify its center. So it is with the religions of the world. Religions differ, but more importantly the viewpoint of those who find themselves within a given structure also differs one from another. These differences are the spokes of the wheel but they point to the center. The center is namely the essence of God, a recognition of a strength, of a power beyond that of the spokes, but also that entity which joins all the spokes.

The discrepancies in each of your approaches to God are not limited to experiences of the present time. They are evidence of contrasts in the perspectives of all who have attempted to come to know God in a personal way. It is for this reason that one cannot view any religious sect or philosophy as infallible, for the perspectives

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which brought about the general philosophies are so divergent. By viewing the spoke of a wheel, a single spoke, you cannot determine in which direction the hub is located. You are aware only of the existence of that item. It is by observing the pattern of spokes that you identify the center of strength. As you consider the merits of any religious doctrine, you cannot judge its validity by observing isolated approaches. You can only reach an understanding of its application and validity to your life by gaining an understanding of its pattern, of its viewpoints.

Each of you is familiar with the Christian doctrines relating to the death of Jesus and to its importance in your lives. All religions find central figures to which they can relate. The figure may be God by whatever name, or a teacher, but a central figure is vital.

The importance of Jesus as a spiritual force is understood most clearly in his faith. He is not alone in his demonstration of supreme faith. There have been others and there shall be others in the future. His importance to you is as an example. He illustrated faith. You seek faith and work toward it and try to develop it. He exercised it in a most visible way. That is the meaning of his example. Through his faith came many teachings, teachings of his perspective of God, of his perspectives of what life was meant to be, but all of his instruction, all that has been written about him, in the end centers upon his example of faith.

We have said before that he did not rise physically from the dead. It is a metaphor, but it has great meaning because it reflects the intense belief of those who were close to him that somehow, in a strong but intangible way, he was with them. Each of you has experienced times in your lives when one has passed on to our side, but yet you know as surely as if you could see that person that you and the other were close, were united. Your experience of such feelings is in common with that which was experienced by those who interpret the feelings of closeness to a Jesus who had departed.

We have also said it is incorrect for you to take a simplistic view so often taught that Jesus died to save you from your sins. In a sense that is the result, but it is not the fact. It is not the generation of events. Being saved, according to whatever religion you interpret it, means an identification with God, by whatever name you wish to call the Spirit Center. It is a willingness to open yourself to the acceptance of the fact that God is a part of you, that you are a part of God. It is accepting the reality that each of you is divine.

If you accept this fully, you cannot accept a belief that God hates or punishes, for you would not inflict injury upon yourself. Neither would God. You are all a part of God; you are God. Being saved is a recognition of that. To understand the doctrine of being saved by the death of Jesus, you must understand that the blessing of your being saved, as you wish to call it, is actually based on your willingness to recognize Jesus' faith, his willingness to accept what was a part of life for him, his recognition that there

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was a higher purpose to life than merely living. That is what is meant by being saved. When you recognize his faith, then you can find room for growth in your own. But Jesus was not the only person who has served as an example which has elevated humanity. You cannot lay claim to having an association with the one person who recognized God.

Each of you recognizes God. Each of you has an opportunity to save another. Each of you has the capacity and the strength, if you choose, to serve as a model, to be one who gives strength to another's quest. You elevate that person. You develop their soul, just as you develop your own, by exercising a level of faith that each of you so strongly seeks. It is important not to become wrapped up in doctrinal considerations. So much energy is expended in an attempt to strictly recognize, in absolute terms, the meaning of God and the application of love.

Religions must look for opportunities for unity. All must seek a hub. Each of you looks for that central point in your life, and therefore you must not be so critical of the searchings of one person or that of a body of people. The search must continue. As you gather in this circle, you are searching. For some, such a search transcends logic. For some, it is very logical. There are many who scoff at such searches. The validity of each search can only be measured by the needs of that soul.

Each of you looks for that which has meaning in your lives. You look for opportunities clarifying God's presence and clarifying your understanding of your place within the body of God. Accept the fact that all religions of the world are devoted to the same search that you experience. It is only the manner which differs. But by being open to God speaking to each of you, you will find ways of continuing to draw closer to one another and to God, the hub.

We see the lights of each of your souls. There are so many colors, the view to us is magnificent! Your lights are strong. They have the strength to illuminate other souls.

Throughout your daily lives you must be open to the needs of others. You must actively seek the opportunities for illumination. Find those who are looking but cannot see. Give them vision. Help provide an example in your own way which can in time provide meaning in life to another. Recognize the differences between you, but concentrate on the similarities as well. You are all united. The spokes of the wheel always come together at the hub. The more you reach out to another, the closer you become to that person. As you become closer, you also draw nearer to God.

God answers your prayers—those prayers that you feel in the deepest part of your soul, those prayers which are voiced and those which remain silently offered. They have been answered, for as we have told you, God's response to prayer is immediate. It is your recognition of the response that takes time.

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Be glad that you are aware of God. Be glad that you are motivated to seek, for without your reaching, progress cannot be made so quickly. It is never as steady as when you choose to desire greater understanding.

We, your guides, remain with you for long periods of time. We know your thoughts, we know your concerns. God gives us this capacity through light which is reflected outward to you. Rely on us. We are as a friend to you. You need friends not only when you are in difficulty but when you wish to share your rejoicing. We are with you so that you may be with us. We are with you to focus God's light on your souls. It is our responsibility and we do it with love. Turn to us, turn to God more frequently. We are God's servants.

When you pray to God for strength or insight, God gives it to you, but we are helpless in our responsibilities unless you not only pray for help, but open yourselves to receive it. There are so many souls who ask for God's strength but remain closed to receive it, and we stand by with a feeling of remorse and regret and a desire to do all we can to open those souls so that they may receive God's light.

Remain open at all times. Recognize the God in everyone and be willing to accept your own divinity. Reach out to God with your souls. Strive to be close to God and to one another, and blessings shall flow to you abundantly.

And now we bless you with God's strength and love and care.

Amen.