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- *The futility of defining God*
- *The inward and outward journey*
- *Conflict and growth*

Each one of you is blessed beyond measure. You are blessed by what you know, by your perception and understanding. You are also blessed in being empowered to serve as hands of God.

You express concern over the possibility of limiting God, describing in some way the essence of God which has its own self-imposed limits, the limits of human capacity. It is important for you to understand that all of humankind provides a means by which God's work may be successfully implemented within the human experience. But God is also so much more than the collective human experience.

There are no limits to God. There is no way of drawing a line around God's capacity, God's power. It cannot be defined completely, for any definition would have its implied limitations indicating what God isn't. You cannot say definitively what God is, because then you can describe all that is not God. The fact is that God is the totality of all that is, has been, and ever will be. There is no corner of reality that is beyond the reach of God. We do not speak only of animate life, life engaged in the exchange of oxygen or carbon dioxide. We are referring to everything that exists.

From our perspective on a spiritual plane, we are far more aware of the interrelatedness of everything than we were when experiencing human life. You see such a small portion of what really exists. All the knowledge that has been accumulated to date is but a far and remote corner of the totality that is God. One considers the formation of the heavens, the Big Bang Theory of the universe, and one believes the universe to be expanding. But God is so far greater than the universe, for before the universe existed as you know it, there was always God. Before time existed, there was God.

God has not been manufactured or constructed by humankind as a way of understanding its own existence. Such an argument indeed has been made by some very responsible theologians. The sense that God is continuous, that God really is a full circle, is incredibly difficult to explain let alone to understand. We cannot define God in any terms. For that reason, many believers resist depicting God in any art form. Many refuse to give God a name because that is too limiting. It is easy to criticize those who will not use a term that refers to God, that will not depict anything visually that refers to God. Criticism of these people is shortsighted and certainly shows a lack of understanding, particularly for the vastness of God. For many it is felt that any description by definition limits, and it is out of an acknowledgment of the totality of God rather than ignorance that leads people to avoid such human-like descriptions of God.

You feel that God loves you, and this is a human attribute. You say this because it helps to understand in some measure the positive nature of God's presence in human

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life, but God cannot be described according to human attributes. God is more than just love as you know it in all of its manifestations. God is more than a nurturing, caring, supportive presence. Without God there would be simply nothing. Everything that exists is the result of God.

Human beings fit into God's presence because it is human beings who respond to one another. It is difficult to grasp in one's understanding the response of an unseen power, the blessings bestowed upon you by a force, by a strength that cannot be described. It is understandable that humans try to describe the entity of God in a format that can be understood. To the extent that such description gives courage, provides an example, allows for hope, such descriptions are beneficial and should never be rejected. But any description that can be seen as limiting just doesn't work.

Much of your life is spent attempting to understand life around you. You speak of the outer journey and the inner journey. You are splitting the two apart. They cannot be split. The outer journey of your own experiences is a result of the inner journey. The inner journey can be identified because of characteristics unlike the outer journey. This outer journey and the inner journey are actually manifestations of the same force, the same influence, the same presence. They are the responses of your soul as it acknowledges the reality of God. When God is felt within, it becomes an inner journey. When God is recognized from without, it is an outward journey. But in truth, the presence of God is continuous from within as well as without. It is not so constructive to devote great energy to a distinction between the two.

You know you must experience love to give love. You might say that's inner journey/outward journey. But what is it that is actually operating here? It is love. Whether given or received, it is a power that exists. It is a force that can affect your own lives as well as the lives of others.

The light that shines through the window and illuminates the interior of a house is the same light that illuminates the outside. Recognizing there is an obvious difference between your home and your environment, the light remains the same. It comes from the same source. It serves the same purposes. It warms the soul. It warms the earth. It provides for nourishment. It provides for inspiration. It provides for life. Just as there is no difference between the light coming through the window and the light illuminating the inside, the light that is visible on the outside, there is no difference really between the inward journey/the outward journey, the love that is received/the love that is given. It is really all the same.

You may perceive your close friends as being different from people you do not know on the other side of the world, but that is only a difference in perspective. People are people. Whether you know them well or not, they are the same. It is a continuity of human life. The location of that life has no meaning of its own.

We talk about conflict and growth. Because there is growth arising from conflict, the growth does not happen on its own, and therefore it is part of the conflict. The mighty

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tree grows from the smallest seed. It is not a separate entity. All that is in the seed is in the tree. The tree is just a different shape, a different representation, a different manifestation of the same thing.

Your children are no different. They are not another entity from you. You are a part of them. There is a bond. That bond stretches back an eternity, but it also stretches forward an eternity.

Since nothing is created and nothing is destroyed, there is only change. That an individual whom you have never met lives far away has no bearing on the fact that you and that individual are part of the same creation. The good that comes from conflict is merely another manifestation of the same energy. It is not a different entity. It is much like an actor who plays several parts. Those parts have their identifiable characters, but the actor remains the same.

Human life and spiritual life are not really removed from one another. We are not really different from you. The manifestation, the appearance, the character of our form of life, the spiritual form, may seem vastly different from the physical structure of life, but we are collectively the same. It is this philosophy that is so essential in understanding why you collectively are the hands and eyes, the heart of God within the human experience. Since you are all the same entity, it is only logical to acknowledge that function.

Life experience in human form is a great opportunity. Each of you gives this experience great dignity. Each of you is concerned about why you are alive, what you are to do when you are alive, what the meaning of that life is. Such questions are enormously significant. Such questions can never be fully or adequately answered, but the fact that you asked those questions means that you are growing, means that you are evolving, broadening, deepening, that you are being given the skills, the tools that are necessary to become godly.

We hope that this discussion helps you to understand why conflict is so important, why it is not something isolated, to be separated out from the rest of life. It is to be welcomed, it is to be embraced, for it is the seed from which the tree grows. Welcome the differences that you experience between people, between perspectives, between cultures and habits. Acknowledge those differences. There is nothing wrong with doing that. The strength comes when you recognize in the midst of that acknowledgment how meaningless those differences really are.

We are in fact no different from you. We exist spiritually but so do you. You all have a spiritual life. Your spiritual life is encased in a physical body, but the fact that you and we share a spiritual life means in the most significant way we are identical to each other. We are not separated. We are not different.

God blesses your lives together. God blesses the unity that you occasionally glimpse when you are most receptive. God answers each of your prayers long before you ever voice them. God provides you with strength long before you are aware of its need. God provides you peace within a sea of conflict. God provides you with a vision that leads

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ever outward and yet a vision that fully accepts the totality of Oneness that is common to all that surrounds you.

You are blessed by God's presence. You are a part of God's presence. You facilitate that presence. You magnify it. You spread that presence. You witness to it, and the world is a better place, for God's will *is* being done. God's kingdom *is* present. It is not something to wish for; it is something to see.

We bless you with your vision. We bless you as your eyes are opened to the great vistas affirming the unity of all.

Amen.