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- *All that is received must be given away*
- *When will life end?*
- *Accept yourself so you can accept another*
- *Life is not the pursuit of perfection but the search for divine awareness*
- *Expand your abilities to recognize God's response to prayer*

God, the almighty power in the universe, of all creation, of your lives, in your inner experiences, is with you at all times. And yet, at times like these when you meet together, God's presence can be felt more strongly because each of you is united in your desire to be brought closer in your understanding. Our prayers for you are for your widening understanding and your deepening commitment to reflect God's presence to others.

You speak of a concern about the application of these teachings, about making what God conveys to each of you a real part of your life. Indeed, all that is given to you is to be yet given away by you. You are given love, but you are to give love. You are given peace, but you must give peace. You receive God's light, but you must give God's light. You receive patient love, but you must give patient love. You are given tolerance, and you must give tolerance. It is we who act as vehicles bringing God's light to you, but it is you who must act as the vehicles sending that light away to others around you. There is nothing that we provide you which must remain with you, for all that is given must in turn be given away. You are channels, just as we are.

The continuity of God, as an influence in human life, is achieved through our efforts and through yours. If we shy away from our responsibilities or if you also restrict yours, God's work then is not done. The effort is never ended but the results are frustrated. God never gives up. We and you must also never give up. There is a purpose to human life, as you know, but there is a purpose to the life of the world. Each of you experiences human existence as a means of soul development, but the world with all of its people taken together has a purpose of life.

You worry about the end of human life, either your own or that of humanity. Your life will end when your purpose is accomplished. The life of humankind will also be continued until its purpose is accomplished. There is nothing gained through concern for one's own life, but there is much to be gained through a sense of reverence for the importance of all life. Ultimately humankind is important to human beings only when as individuals they value its continued existence. On a more intimate plane, friendship is important only to the extent that two people value what friendship can be. Your responsibilities in life are both self-directed and other-directed. You must be willing to accept yourself fully and in love.

It is difficult for many of you to love yourselves, for each of you is more aware than anyone else of your individual shortcomings. Each of you can become negatively

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intolerant of yourself. By that, we mean that you do not tolerate yourselves to such an extent that you tend to pull yourselves downward. You prevent yourselves from achieving positive results in life. Each of you must learn to be tolerant of yourself, recognizing that life is not the pursuit of perfection but the search for a divine awareness. If one becomes perfect at some task and is yet limited in awareness of God, life has not been fulfilled to its potential. But one who does not achieve perfection in some discipline and yet is aware of God and applies that awareness in daily living, that life is indeed fulfilled and is far richer than that life of the first person.

Recognizing God and reflecting God are two very different realities. One can recognize God superficially, know that somehow, in some form, there is a God, but such a nebulous recognition does not lead to the expression of God. A full recognition of God implies, it even requires, a complete acceptance of oneself. Only when you fully accept yourself can you most effectively reflect God to another. Note here the qualification “most effectively,” for each of you reflects God at one level of intensity or another without always being able at a given moment to accept yourself—therefore, the ultimate need to love oneself.

Your relationship with others is an outgrowth of your relationship to yourself. There has been much written and spoken about what you refer to as the “me generation,” the centering of all attention on the self. That is not God’s purpose in life, for you to feel that you as an individual are the most important being in your life. God wishes you to understand that if anything, it is the reverse, namely it is the other person, any other person with whom you are in contact, who is important, who is most important in the relationship.

The purpose of accepting oneself is so that you may accept another. Accepting oneself is the means; accepting another is the objective. This objective of accepting another in love is the ultimate evidence of growth, spiritually, as manifest in human life. Our purpose, our objective, in serving God is to love you. We, your guides, love you—that is why we are your guides. We do not put you second in importance to our own needs. Of course we grow spiritually. Of course we have attained a level of self love, but that is only so that we really understand the power of love through personal experience. That love has little meaning ultimately unless it is passed on to you. Our existence, therefore, is centered on you.

We feel so often that you sense that. We feel that you experience these communions of the spirit with an understanding that we are dedicated to you, not to ourselves. Great leaders in your history are recognized ultimately by their orientation toward others. When we speak of great leaders, we talk of those whom you emulate as being in some manner or another servants of God. Their lives are centered on serving, and serving means giving, never taking.

We work for you. We serve God. We serve you. When you pray to God, we help your prayer to open up the means of receiving God. We reflect our experience of human

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life and your experience of human life, but always from the spirit of giving and service. We see ourselves as a kind of intermediary, not one who stops a prayer to God and polishes it for further transmission, but one who facilitates, one who gives strength. Each of you must be intermediaries of God. Each of you must serve the function of exercising your understanding of God. That which you learn in your meetings together, in which you discuss, cannot stop where you are. It must be continued. You must find ways of applying it.

Those ways do not come naturally or automatically. If you find difficulty in seeing the application of that which is given you, then your prayers should be for such help as is necessary. Perhaps God's response is not in the application immediately of that which you have been given, but in the acceptance of yourselves first. Perhaps that is the first step, and then after the acceptance, the application.

God answers your prayers in the most expedient way, the most immediate manner imaginable, but the response frequently falls on a different place in your lives than that which you intended or expected. You pray for the ability to apply God's teachings. That ability may come only after that self-acceptance of which we spoke.

And so the period of time for self-respect and sense of worth and value may be extensive, but that is not what is important, for you have been asking through prayer for God's help in each of your lives, and that response from God has taken place. It is for you to find the location within your life which indicates God's response. When you feel frustration and anxiety about any aspect of your lives, the cause is frequently that you are seeking God's response in one location, figuratively speaking, when God has answered those prayers in a different way.

God does not answer prayers in a literal manner as a direct reply to a specific request, in a form easily recognized and immediately seen. If you pray for help, your prayer is answered, but the answer may not be in the form of immediate, observable help but in a form which is more important—a sense of depth, of love and understanding, a heightened awareness of God's presence in another's life or your own life. In short, one does not often specifically get what one specifically prays for. The reason, quite simply, is that when you pray, you frequently pray for the wrong things.

Prayer is natural and it is important and it is always answered. These things you know. But prayer can be learned also. As we have said, prayer is like a two-way street. It opens up the channel for you to receive God's answer. Prayer which is done appropriately means prayer in which you can recognize God's response. It has nothing to do with the words you use or their order or syntax. Whether you say "you, thee, thy, thine" is up to you. God doesn't care. What God does care about is that you recognize God's response.

When you pray for another, pray that God's strength can be permitted to enfold the life of another. That prayer is answered, and you can be reassured because you know that God's light and strength can enfold another. You are asking for strength, for

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comfort, for peace, and you are enabling that to take place. But the nature or the result of that offering of God cannot be dictated. We know that none of you would tell God what to do. Your prayers are never offered with that in mind, but when you pray, you frequently limit your ability to recognize God's response. If you pray for God's healing, you frequently limit your perception to absolute help when more important responses, broader responses, may actually have been forthcoming, which you entirely missed.

Be willing to widen your abilities to recognize God's response in prayer. Be ready to give all that you have been given. Be willing to provide love to another because you have been given love, to be tolerant as you have been treated with tolerance, to be respectful as you have been given respect. Above all, learn to love as you are loved. Give to others what God gives you. That is your purpose in life. It is by doing thus that you grow spiritually. That is why you are the link between souls. That is why you are so closely associated with the development of all others.

Our love is for you. You must pass that love onto others. Our concern is for your growth, and you must pass that concern onto others. We help transmit God's light to your light. You must also transmit that light to the lives of others. Each of you can serve as a channel doing God's work in the world.

You have been blessed magnificently by God. Recognize the blessings of others. Reinforce them. For many, it may be your love which is God's blessing on the world.

And now we surround you with our peace and warmth and light.

Amen.