

January 24, 2002

- *The quiet voice of God*
- *Know yourself so you can serve others*
- *Accentuate the positive*

God speaks to each one of you in a way that is most beneficial, most appropriate, most supportive. When God speaks, the voice is heard from within. God's voice is not a powerful voice that is loud and dominating, but rather it is a voice that is heard most clearly by everyone in the greatest of stillness. You do not hear God in the bustle of daily activities. You must allow yourselves still more opportunities to withdraw, to find peace from without so that you may achieve peace from within. God's peace is an internal peace. It is a peace of the spirit, it is a peace of countenance; it is not a peace of activity. God's peace is a peace that allows each of you the luxury of listening, not just listening to God, but listening to others, and of great importance, listening to yourselves.

What is it you hear when you listen to yourselves? Why should you listen to yourselves? Your lives are a combination of activity and reflection, of the external and the internal, of the physical and the emotional. Your lives mix joy and sadness, confidence and fear. To say that your lives have many facets is an understatement at best, but for you to live a life that we have characterized as godly, as godlike, you must each of you learn to listen to yourselves.

A battery is incapable of functioning endlessly with no recharging. For each of you to serve the world by bringing God's light to an ever increasing circle, you must find ways of replenishing yourselves. You must learn in the most honest means possible what and who you really are. If someone asks you who you are, you may answer professionally, personally—there are many layers that describe who you are. But you must pry beneath those layers to truly understand what motivates you, what gives your lives character.

Being open to yourselves, listening to yourselves, seeing yourselves provide you with a strength beyond your activities. When you are fully aware of your spiritual nature, that fire cannot possibly be quenched. When you see yourselves as doers, the energy required to persist in the doing is not limitless. You are ultimately not what you do or what you say. The essence of who you are is found in your own awareness of your spiritual wellspring. That wellspring never runs dry. When you are motivated to action because of your awareness of your spirit core, you will never tire because your attention is directed fully toward that which resides within you. This is far beyond the issue of being self-absorbed, for self-absorption, self-preoccupation, walls out the realities of the world in which you live. Being aware of your spiritual essence becomes an empowering activity, that activity that inspires and directs and replenishes itself. When you are committed to an issue because you are fully aware of the unity of all

January 24, 2002

creation, the unity of humankind, that vision of unity is enough to keep the passions aflame.

You must look within. Recognize the importance of your soul, not just acknowledge it, but clearly recognize it, clearly accept the reality of that divine spark, for it is that vision of ultimate reality that informs all that you do in your human interaction with others. How do you achieve this self-vision, this inner awareness? Prayer, as we have said, is vision, but beyond prayer is the need for each of you to exercise patience. Such awareness of self, such vision of one's divinity, does not come quickly nor is it achieved with ease. You must be absolutely honest with yourselves.

Recognize what is affirming in you, but recognize also those parts of your lives that are not affirming. That which is critical, cast that away. That which is cynical, discard it. Those components of your lives that create in you discouragement, envy, anger, let them go. It is natural to feel anger, and we don't expect that such feelings will ever entirely vanish, but you are letting go of the dominance of those feelings. You are letting go of the prominence, the importance that you give to those feelings.

For human beings it is more intense to feel sadness than it is to feel joy. Sadness brings upon it worry, anxieties. Joy is its own reward, but it is so short-lived. As a result, you provide far too great a space for the entertainment of negatives than you do for the experience of what is positive and what is affirmed. By providing greater presence for that which is positive, you allow less space to be occupied by the negative.

Your souls are the seat of all that is positive, all that affirms, all that acknowledges beauty. When you allow such affirmation to become a more dominant presence in your lives, you are then coming closer to a view of your spiritual essence. Such strength is yours when you take in and acknowledge that positive, affirming presence. When you are directed by a force that is positive, there is no way that you can lead a life that is characterized by a nourishing of that which is negative. Being positive within empowers you to reach out and be affirming to others. If you are consumed by fear and anxiety, anger and frustration, how can you exert the affirmation of life to another when you do not embrace it fully yourselves?

Living a life reflective of God does not mean living a life looking inward to the exclusion of action and interaction. A godly life acknowledges the positive, the affirming qualities that each of you possesses, and then applies that affirmation in the world that surrounds you. When you feel discouraged, dig deep to find what is good. When you experience anger, take a moment to reflect on the joy in your life. When you are hungry, remember what it means to feel satisfied. When you recall the suffering of others, remember the experiences of your own sufferings and your transitions from darkness to light. Recognizing that possibility, you are able to provide a loving and supporting presence to others who may hunger.

January 24, 2002

You cannot give hope without having experienced hope. You cannot provide an example for overcoming what causes others pain unless you are aware of your having overcome pain. Being wholly present in life means being open to all that life offers. But prevailing in that presence also means that you must acknowledge those ways in which you have prevailed in adversity. When you experience physical illness, you must recognize the strength of what is healthy. That is prevailing over illness. You are then able to empower your neighbor to prevail over illness. When you are verbally attacked or criticized by another, you overcome that confrontation because of a self-confidence, because of your recognition that your value as human beings goes beyond that which may be criticized. Seeing your ability in the past to overcome criticism should help provide you the strength necessary to bring comfort to others.

Unless you reach out to another, your own lessons leading to self-affirmation become essentially meaningless. Your growth is important not because you grow; your growth is important because you are empowered to affirm and enhance someone else. Your value, your contributions in life that are of greatest consequence are those contributions that benefit others. Knowledge by itself has little meaning. Only when knowledge is shared and others become enlightened does that knowledge take on significance. So it is with your lives. Your interactions with others are given character and substance and value because of your awareness of self.

We on our side of the divide are fully aware of ourselves for our selves are purely spiritual. We are clearly aware of that spiritual essence. We see our own spiritual essences for we *are* the essence. Because we are that core of divinity, we are able to respond to the needs of other spirits. When a soul joins us for the first time, there is often bewilderment. There is often confusion and sometimes fear, for the environment—what is seen, what is felt—is so much more intense than anything experienced in human life. We reach out to those spirit-forms who have joined us. We give comfort. We provide guidance. We give a sense of reality. We take whatever form has meaning to the soul who has arrived. Therefore, our full knowledge of self is used to help nurture the full knowledge of such souls that have joined us.

Were all souls the same in their development, there would be little need for our firm and complete understanding of our own divinity. If all human beings were all-knowing, there would be no need for education. Education assists in the learning process and is therefore vital. Knowledge of the self assists in the development of others and therefore is important for us. While we are fully aware of ourselves, we can only hope that your knowledge of self becomes an important life-long commitment for each of you.

You live to serve, but you can serve only when you know yourselves. It is important therefore that you persist in seeking solitude so that you may hear God's guidance in your lives. It is that guidance that helps you on the path inward so that you may be God's blessing in the world around you. It is a wonderful opportunity that each

January 24, 2002

of you is given. It should never be a burden for it can only bring enormous joy to you and to all whom you serve.

Allow yourselves the luxury of self-awareness. Be willing to love yourselves. You will then be able to express that love as you live your lives. Looking within gives you the power to act, to spread peace, to affirm your neighbor. It is a great service, it is a great calling, and it is the greatest blessing that each of you is given. So rejoice in this blessing of an ability to look inward and the blessing of the ability to respond around you.

You have an opportunity to affirm the lives of others. Others have the opportunity to affirm your life. It is that mutual affirmation, it is the mutual support expressed lovingly that is the reason you experience your human lives. It gives meaning to your lives and it provides a direction for each of you to pursue.

We love you because we have learned what it means to love ourselves. We provide you with spiritual strength because we have learned what spiritual strength means to us. Go forward in your lives renewed with a conviction that your souls are strong and are the source of inspiration that will shape your lives and bring love, compassion, understanding and a peaceful presence to the lives of others.

Rejoice, you are alive!

Amen.