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- *Dynamic relationship between God and humans*
- *Blind obedience does not result in spiritual growth*
- *Pray for nourishment*
- *The challenge of illness*
- *Balance between spiritual and material life*

God, who is the light for your lives and for us here, is with you and surrounds you as a group and individually with concern and loving care.

You have expressed so many needs at this time, and God has already responded. But it is you who must recognize that response, and it is our pleasure to help you in that recognition, for part of our responsibility, which we exercise most lovingly, is to bring you to a fuller recognition of God's response to all that you would ask. God's answers cannot always be as you would expect, for certainly your relationship to God is one of receiving and not controlling. But this relationship is not a one-sided affair in which you remain idle in God's presence until God speaks. There is much that you can do, not to control God but to interact with God.

Your position in an earthly life and its relationship to God's presence is enormously complex. It is not really like a play where there are fixed roles to be acted out, to be conformed with. It is a dynamic relationship, one which requires many changes. Of course there are some constants. The greatest constant in this interrelationship must be your love for one another. Note that we say *for one another*, not just your love of God, for in loving one another you do love God. By assuming that all that is necessary is to love God, you may easily forget one another. Therefore, the constant in your interrelationship with God is to love one another.

God is not some kind of dictator, benevolent or otherwise, who issues edicts by which you must live in order to receive a given award. That would be too simple. If you were to ask God, "What do I do now?" and God were to respond, "To travel to point A," there is no choice. There is no love. There is no faith. There is only obedience. Obedience in itself does not provide a framework for your spiritual growth. The exercise of choice through faith, within the overriding framework of love, is what nurtures your souls and your earthly lives. Therefore, you must not expect a kind of simplistic relationship in which God provides answers which alleviate the need for choice or the exercise of faith.

You know that God answers your prayers. You pray for help and you receive it always, but you do not pray for a lack of options, a lack of choice. You do not ask for a lack of opportunities to exercise faith. That would be similar to denying food in your lives, choosing merely to live but not to eat. Life would cease to exist, for no growth would take place. Without spiritual growth there is no life, for whatever continues to exist without spiritual growth is empty, and life carries with it the implications of growth. That

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growth in the end is spiritual growth. Your interrelationship, therefore, with God is not so much a complete dependency to the point of being nearly helpless, but one of nourishment with a capacity for response.

Your lives receive nourishment from God, but it is you who must respond. The nourishment may or may not come as a result of prayer, but your response will not come forth either without the recognition of nourishment, and that is where we fit into the plan of life as you know it. For it is we who help you to recognize the presence of nourishing forces. It is you who choose the response.

When you pray to God, you pray for nourishment, nourishment of your life or of the life of another. God's response is a heightened presence, an increased potential for nourishment, a potential for growth. Your growth is meaningless and empty without nourishment, but nourishment without growth is also meaningless. It is your response in life which gives meaning to the nourishment of God's light. That is the interrelationship of which we speak. Your prayers are for nourishment. Our prayers are for your growth.

Each of you wonders about the future. Each of you has items of concern whether they be the health of another, the balancing of spiritual and temporal matters, the place of employment, or the direction of one's life. All of these are recognized immediately by God. You pray for answers and God has answered in the form of a heightened presence within your lives. It is not a nonresponse when you do not receive specifics. You must have faith in this. When you ask for detailed answers, those answers which spur you on to greater growth are of ultimate value. Whatever answers you receive which inhibit the exercise of choice are not nourishing. That is not to say that God wishes to remain silent about specific concerns. God wishes to respond to all that is of importance for each of you, but only in a manner which elicits response on your part rather than a patient acceptance.

In many communications from God through us information has been given relating to the future, but we reiterate that the future is not predetermined, for that would withdraw the necessity for your response. If you know for a fact that a particular event will take place within a known time frame and it has been your concern whether or not such an event would happen, where is the growth? You may be spared anxieties. Worry may no longer be a part of your relationship with a future event, but what kind of growth has occurred? There has been none.

God requires that you grow, and it is part of your responsibilities to help that growth take place. For this reason it is not beneficial for absolute details of pending events to be revealed. There can be changes from absolute solutions, for much that occurs is the result of human will and not the act of God. As long as humans retain a free will, the dynamics for choice, nothing related to that will can be unmistakably predicted. We see ahead. We see forward just as you recollect the past. The details themselves are not what is important. It is the trends which are evidenced that provide a meaning to life's direction, a sense of perspective.

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You have concerns over the aspect of predicting the health of another. What is important is that God saw fit to reassure this family of the positive outcome of the illness. For whether an illness occurs to you or to another who is loved, it must not be defeating either to that other person or to you. You are not defeated by illness; you are challenged by it. Illness has within it the seeds for growth and strength, the potential for a kind of spiritual victory. It is the ultimate victory which we see, not the individual skirmishes. The reason it is possible for us to view such progress is that we know the strength of the soul that is suffering. We know its character, its weaknesses, its potential. We can see its light and its light tells us all. For that reason we are confident of a joyful conclusion to the suffering. It is for that reason that your family is given hope. There must be no devastation to such illness. It does not make it easy, but nevertheless you need not feel defeated.

It is so easy for each of you to interpret what we say in a manner that is in accord with your wishes. We are limited in our communication to you by your perception of concepts, of words, of ideas, for we communicate to you by these means. But much that we say contains truths beyond what your language can express, and it is therefore difficult for us to find means of transmitting such knowledge to you. What we say is understandable, but the interpretation takes time. Without the time, the perspective is limited and the interpretation incomplete.

When God assures your family of the healing to take place, consider the healing in a spiritual light. That is what is essential. If the healing is spiritual and the body is aware of such strength, much can be endured with courage and dignity and faith. It is when you have no sense of the beyond that the present takes on too great a significance. This present is only transitory. It is not of long duration. Do not ignore the present, but accept the reality that it is not permanent, that there is more to life than living, as you say. Each of you in the group must recognize, therefore, the reason for not being given complete specifics on each and every question which you raise in prayer to God, for God's wisdom is exercised here. It is not our choice. We merely respond to what God transmits through us.

Each of you must find a balance between the spiritual and the material or transitory nature of life, for your life is not one sided. A life devoted solely to the material is empty and meaningless, but likewise a life devoted wholly to the spiritual plane is devoid of the whole purpose for which life is lived, and there is no balance to be found. The fact that each of you seeks proper balance between these two sides of your life is in itself strength-giving. There are so many who experience no concern of proper balance. They proceed through life with emphasis upon one or another aspect, with little concern or knowledge of that side of their life being ignored.

The balance which all seek is a variable one, for God does not play a numbers game in which fifty percent of an effort is balanced with fifty percent of an effort. You should not be concerned therefore with an equalizing of attention on your energies.

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Because life is fluid, so is the general balancing of priorities. Specifically, we have stated often that a priority centered first of all upon God is appropriate and gives meaning in life, but does that mean that one must devote two thirds of your effort in a spiritual direction, reserving the final portion for matters of a more temporal nature? Of course not. Because your lives are fluid, the balancing will change. The strongest balance will remain and must remain centered on God, but the effects of the physical or material life will vary in their importance.

There are periods of your life when you find changes in emphasis. There are times when you are concerned over finances, but that does not negate the importance of God within your life. That interrelationship remains paramount, but you exercise your will over the material within God's light, not in God's shadow. There are other phases within your life span in which material concerns play a lesser role and more energy may be expended in a consideration of spiritual material, and that too is as it should be.

If you are concerned at any time in your lives that you are placing too much emphasis on the physical rather than spiritual life, that in itself is an indication of the need for change. If you feel centered on God and are responding to more physical concerns, that is fine for your view is first to God and then to life around you. When you experience doubt, that is a kind of signal that a rearrangement of the balance in your priorities is needed. God does not feel disappointed or angry or in some way remorseful when your attentions must turn to matters of your physical life, your earthly life, for remember, that is why you are living.

It is God's wish that somehow through our efforts you may be guided in your response to the material through your perception of the spiritual. It is when you lose that perception that the balance becomes out of line. Accept the fluidity of your lives, the variations between spiritual and material, the variations in the places where you reside, those towns and cities and circles of friends, for such changes are important, not in themselves, but as they help to mold and give character to your soul that is reflected thereby into a richer physical life.

Nothing is really permanent in your lives viewed physically. All is change. But spiritually, God is permanent in that you are always in God's light. No matter what you do, no matter where you go, no matter what becomes of you, you remain in that light always. What an enormous comfort it can be to each of you to truly believe in the constancy of God and in the constancy of your interrelationship—its reality with God, no matter how the details of that relationship may vary in their flow. Such a relationship is, nevertheless, always a fact.

You are never cut off from God. You are never alone. You are never forgotten. You are never punished by God; you are only loved. You are only given strength by God's presence. God is not vindictive. God does not punish you, God punishes no one. God's place in history is not one of the great judge and punisher of human beings. God

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may be seen as such, but it is not so. God always provides nourishment. Remember, it is you who provide the response.

We see your lives filled with many changes, but always with growth, always with a potential for love toward another. Respond to the world around you with peace. Respond with a lovingness that accepts and does not criticize. Respond with care, with concern. Respond by being sensitive to another's needs. Respond to another as a reflection of God's presence within the world, and you will all be dearly blessed by that wondrous light.

Amen.