

August 5, 2013

- *Listening to God*
- *The closeness of the spiritual and physical worlds*
- *With prayer, what matters is intention*
- *Recognizing, accepting, and responding to needs*
- *God is because you are*

God speaks, and each of you listens. God speaks of love, of belonging, of growth, of vision, but God speaks most clearly when you allow yourselves to be fully in a listening and not in a speaking mode. Certainly you can listen while you're speaking, but it is the presence of listening, the presence of being fully open that provides you the ears to hear as God speaks.

Who is it that you are actually listening to when you listen to God? You are not listening to some sort of super humanoid spiritual presence. When you listen to God, you listen to the individual who is next to you. You listen to the voice within, to your guides. You listen to nature beyond the human life. You listen to the animals. You listen to the trees, the plants. You listen to the air as it blows across your face. You listen by being aware at all times of your surroundings.

You listen to the stones, for they have much to say. The stones on the ground are your most immediate connection to what you perceive to be the history of your own solar system, the history of the universe, the history of your earth. Even those stones carry with them the elements that are part of what is required for the existence of human life. You and the stones are permanently connected, and it will be the same in the future when you are no longer engaged in human life as you know it.

You are, each of you, a product of all that is, but you are also the material, the foundation of all that is to be. Human life is all you are fully cognizant of, and yet it is only a small component of the totality of your own experience. You existed long before your current life, and you will exist long after your current life. Some of your conversation together relates to that very clear reality. It is a reality that you acknowledge, but one which cannot be fully understood. Human life is, after all, a part of the continuum of what God is. You are truly permanent. You have always been, you always are, you always shall be.

When you experience the transition of others from life in human form to that of the spirit, you are briefly aware of this unbroken connection. You speak of the term "being gone" when someone transitions to spiritual life, and that is certainly understandable, for an individual is no longer physically present. And yet, the truth is that an individual who has transitioned is not only not gone but, more importantly, is even more present.

When you listen to God, you listen for that presence, for you are listening to your neighbor with the same skill, with the same intention. What one individual may say to

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you across the fence is no different in process to what one spirit says to you across the transition from human to spiritual life. You are all closer to those who have joined us than you ever were when they were in physical proximity.

Your senses cannot detect all that is, as you know. Your senses do not see the space that exists at the atomic level of life. Your senses do not hear unaided the waves of radio transmission or any kind of radiation. You see the light from the sun, but you don't see the particles of which light is constructed. You don't see or feel or hear thoughts, but thoughts are very real. Thoughts communicate, but they communicate at a level beyond what your senses treat you with.

And so it is with your connection to those who have joined all of us in the spiritual plane of existence. They are with you, just as we are with you. You are guided by your faith, not by your knowledge. Your knowledge can help explain what your senses provide you, but faith goes a step further. Faith is really listening. It is believing because you listen, not because of what you absorb through your senses. The life of the spirit, therefore, is one which can only be understood by your faith, not your absolute knowledge. The limitations of your senses have no effect on what is real. Because you are unaware of something has no bearing on whether it exists.

God listens; God speaks. You listen; you speak, but in each case, the listening comes first. The listening is the openness. You pray to God on behalf of others, and God's response is immediate, but that response is not as a human being would respond. That response is the providing of all that is necessary for whatever it is you may pray for.

When you pray, it is not the words that are important but rather the intention. When you pray for connection with others, that prayer opens you to the connection for which you pray. If you pray for great wealth, you are not praying for money or power or influence. You're really praying for a sense of self that allows you to acknowledge your own dignity. Most prayers involve a search for dignity, for self-respect.

When you pray for another who is in great need, you pray that another may be uplifted and affirmed and loved, but why are uplifting and affirmation and love important? It is important that each of these is experienced, for each gives a sense of personal value—not worth, *value*—equal value to all others. When you feel you occupy your space in the circle as an entity of equal value, then you no longer feel the need to pray for those things that give you a sense of value. If you feel through your listening that you and all human beings are equal, there is little need to try to elevate yourselves through the acquisition of more and more and more, however those mores may be defined. You seek peace in your lives, but you will fully experience that peace only when you don't feel there is a need for something more.

You're asked by God to accept who you are, to accept who your neighbor is, to accept the life that you currently experience. You're asked to be at peace with human presence. When you accept the value of all that you experience as being of equal

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importance, you will then cease to be pleading for something beyond what you are experiencing. You pray for health when you perceive there is a lack of health. You pray for peace when it is your understanding that there is no peace. You pray for joy when you believe there is not enough joy. But when you begin to accept what life currently is and your belonging to that reality, the impatience that leads to pleading is dissipated. Yes, you are aware of so much suffering in the world—personal suffering, community suffering—but in acknowledging that suffering, you must also acknowledge that that, too, is an equal part of human existence and human growth, the experience of being a human being.

Human life is never conceived and offered in such a way that it is without trial, without agonies, without concerns, without worries, without seeming uncompromising differences between people. That is the human experience. Yes, you can work to emphasize the equality of all, and that is certainly an important process in which to be engaged, but that is your process. Others will find another direction for their lives, and that belongs to those individuals. We cannot say that what one pursues has more importance than what another pursues. You do what you do. You engage as you find yourselves motivated to engage. If you feel motivated in your lives to serving others or to leading others in whatever capacity, it is not a recognizable difference. All human endeavor ultimately serves to help humanity on its own path.

The criminals as you perceive them in your own society serve a purpose beyond specifics of what they do that is opposed to society norms. From the criminal, you begin to learn what it means to be respectful of others rather than abusive. From a position of illness, you learn to appreciate the experience of health. If one is always healthy, then the condition of health has less meaning. For those who find financial success in life, there is often a feeling of dissatisfaction, that somehow despite apparent success, there is something missing. The success that is seen by others is not by definition felt as being success from the perspective of those who have been successful. But for those who have nothing, any sense of financial or health adequacy is seen as a great blessing. For those who are destitute, for those who have chronic difficulties of one kind or another, they, too, belong to the journey of the human experience. They, too, are of equal value, regardless of how they perceive themselves. You may devote your lives to those who seem to live on the fringes of society, and that is a choice that every human being can make, but having made that choice, it is important to acknowledge that those whom you serve are equal participants in what God has created.

God speaks; you listen. God affirms the equality of all, and you must listen. You respond as you can respond, but the true reality is that of absolute equality of everything, every individual.

You are each given life in order to experience at one level or another much of what it means to be human. You are not given life to think only of self. You are not given life to ignore all other perspectives than your own. You are given life to have vision. You

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are given life to begin or continue the process of growth, the process of listening, the process of knowing that God is because you are, not God is and therefore you are. You exist in order that God exists. You are part of the creation, but in being a part of that creation, you are a part of the Creator.

Acknowledge all that you are aware of in your lives. Acknowledge the fact that all that you see belongs with equal value to what you perceive in your own lives. The greatest suffering that you may observe, regardless of the pain it may cause, is a part of what it means to live a human life. You may wish to alleviate that suffering, and that is fine, because in the response to that suffering, the human condition is brought closer to being a manifestation of God. Without the suffering, there is less energy to become godly. All, therefore, that you observe belongs rightfully to your experience. We are not saying that those who suffer should suffer, and you are lucky when you are not. We are saying, however, that the suffering that you observe, the needs that you become aware of, can become a catalyst, can be a motivation to move the mountains in order to enhance the human experience, and therefore in that light, both the needs and the responses to those needs are equally important and belong together.

When the time comes that you make a transition to our life-form, you will observe and experience the smooth and natural way in which the spirit, the soul, accommodates the continuum of life. Each of you is fortunate in having experienced full lives, and you continue to learn from those experiences, and that learning will proceed forward when you stop and just listen—listen for God by listening to your neighbor, by listening to those who are in need, and then by responding as a reflection of your understanding of God, of love, of one another, of all that has been created.

You are blessed when you listen, and you will be blessed in your responses. God speaks; you listen. Rejoice in that smooth and natural conversation!

Amen.