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- *Spiritual growth requires change*
- *Separation can lead to growth*
- *Being alone has advantages*

God, your spiritual light and eternal strength, your bond of love, is with each of you throughout your lives and in your gathering here this evening.

It is interesting and fitting that much which concerns each of you involves a separation of sorts, though separations are physical and transitional: physical in the sense that locations are changed, transitional in the sense that movement has been made in the nature of a spiritual life. Such separations, such changes in life, are not really a kind of removal. They are merely changes.

Each separation contains within it a kernel or a grain from which growth may be achieved. Separations can lead to growth, but growth can also be viewed as requiring separations, requiring changes. Human life is not static. It does not, cannot, and must not remain glued to a set pattern which is predictable and cyclic in its recurring patterns. Growth through human life requires change. All change may be viewed as a kind of separation. Changes in priorities are separations from pre-established norms, from accustomed ways of perceiving life. That is a separation, but it is not a loss, nor really a removal. It is the development of a separate and additional way of life.

Spiritual growth is the same in its progression through the elimination of one set of standards and the acceptance of another. When you grow spiritually, your sights are set on another target, on another goal. Priorities are different. When you change location in your earthly lives, you are not separating yourselves from life, you are only operating within a new arena. But each new arena, each new area of activity, contains all that is necessary for your next stage of development. When you obtain employment elsewhere, you do not reject and forget all that you are leaving. Rather you are adding on to those experiences and that adding is a form of growth, for out of that accumulation is drawn the potential for personal and spiritual growth.

Your friend's transition to our side was smooth and he is comfortable. He is not in effect rejecting his experiences on earth; he is adding to them through activity towards a different objective. You can see that, for death as you know it is not a denial of life. It is an extension of life. And so it is with physical changes in location. It is not denial; it is extension.

Whenever you face the future without a clear view, it is always with a sense of wonder, perhaps some self-doubt, perhaps an overwhelming feeling of challenge. That is natural. It is impossible to face the future as an unknown commodity when that time frame finally becomes the present. Anxiety is there. It may be repressed, but is there in a sense of concern, a desire for answers, a need for assurances, direction. All of that is very normal.

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For each of you who moves outward into another arena for whatever period of time, you must keep in mind that the critical element of your life, your spiritual entity, is unchanged in its divinity, in its greatness, in its potential for love, in its ability to feel God. You are all still the same. You grow and enlarge your perspectives, but you are still the same in essence.

The concerns which have been voiced openly and which have been expressed quietly to God relating to concerns of the future have been answered by God. God responds immediately, as you know.

You can strengthen your ability to adapt and the ability of those you love to adapt by recognition of those parts of your lives which are not really altered. When a member of a family travels, the family is still together. The relationship between those family members is not lessened. It is still constant. The nature of the lives of those who are moving may be expanded, but the basic life is the same. You are the same whether you are here or thousands of miles distant. Your reactions to life are the same. The level of responsibility that you feel is still the same. A sense of love is the same. Love may not always be expressed as love. It may be expressed in anxiety over leaving an immediate family, but nevertheless, it is love, and the expressions of those feelings should be accepted. Each of you has traveled, has moved, has gone away from family and friends, later to return, and so the experiences which lie ahead are not really new. They may be different, but not new.

You wonder how God can really be concerned about one person when there is so much else of great need in the world also. One of the sides of God which you recognize is God's constant presence. God is present everywhere because God is not physical. If God were physical, God could presumably be drawn from one need to another, but we have said that God is in each of you at all times. Therefore, there is no change in the physical location of God. Since you cannot be separated from God, you cannot believe that God's attention can be drawn elsewhere and then return. If you accept your connection with God as eternal, then you can understand why one can feel God's presence and not be alone.

If your vision is clouded through crisis, you may not sense that God is within, but it is nevertheless the case. When you are alone and not wrought by crises, you can still feel God's presence practically as one who is in the room with you. The sensation is a very personal experience. When you hear these communions, God becomes a personal experience as real as if one were speaking to you. You can feel God's closeness in your life in such a personal way, although it is not always the case. There are many who have only isolated experiences of recognizing that God is truly with them. There are others who experience such sensations frequently.

When you live alone, you very often become more aware of God's presence than when you are with many people. It is easier to be still. It is easier to recognize that there is something else beyond your life. Being alone has marvelous advantages in that it

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affords for many the opportunity of feeling God's closeness. But we see God's power through others, and for that reason it is necessary that all live in some manner with others. God is reflected through them, but you also carry with you the potential for acting as God's reflection toward another.

If you could imagine living a life completely alone, with no awareness of any other human, no thoughts of any other human, no sight of any other human, how could you reflect God? How would you know God exists? You could not. Life then carries with it the balance between being alone and the need for being with others. You can feel God's presence being alone, you can see God's presence by being with others, and you can be God's presence through your relationships with another. It may be another who is physically close. It may be one for whom you pray, but your potential for exercising God's power is realized only in your dealings with another through prayer and directly in a personal sense. Both are necessary.

During the relatively brief period that you will be away from one another, seek times for reflection, for private reflection, seeking a greater understanding of God's purposes, God's words, God's actions. The time which approaches when you are unable to be together fully as a group, to listen as we serve God by reflecting upon your souls, can be a fruitful point of growth for each of you. There is much that you have received, and therefore, much to reflect upon.

Each of you has within you the ability to hear God. Exercise that ability whether it is through meditation or thoughtful consideration of what God has bestowed upon you. Find opportunities for listening to the presence of God within your lives. You will grow spiritually and the nature of your physical lives will be enriched.

We see each of you returning again and continuing in your joint travels toward a wider vision of God. It is a worthwhile effort and we, your guides, rejoice always when you find times to separate yourselves from life's general activities and thereby expand yourselves through your perception of God and your understanding of one another. Rejoice that God has bestowed countless blessings on each of you, some of which you are aware and others which you have not seen!

God blesses all humankind, not just those who pray for help, not just those who are quiet and seek to hear God, but everyone. And because God blesses all in a manner according to each individual need, you may be assured that your needs have each been met by the blessings which God surrounds you with through light, through love and comfort and compassion, inspiration, direction, ordering of challenges and the presenting of opportunities. All comes from God and you are all with God. Rejoice and be thankful!

Amen.