

## TURNING TO GOD

Greetings in the Name of the Lord. Blessings for all of you, my friends.

It is just about a year ago -- as humans measure time -- that this group was formed. And it has been a productive year, from our spiritual point of view. Since all thoughts, endeavors, and feelings create spiritual forms, such a group striving sincerely to get nearer to God is building a veritable temple in the spirit world.

By temple I mean a house to worship the Lord. I said to you that the temple foundation was laid, some of the walls were erected, but the roof was still missing, as were various other details. The building of this temple has been continued by all of you who contribute not only through the tasks you fulfill for this group, but also through every effort you make toward your own purification process. So the temple construction has advanced considerably. The roof is almost finished. And the coming year promises continued development of this beautiful temple, perhaps finishing touches can be added, all in the honor of the Lord and in the honor of the Savior, Jesus Christ.

Occasionally, I will tell you about the progress of your temple. Now I should like to express the joy all of us share in the progress some of my friends have made. I think that I can promise you that a fruitful season is ahead of us, one that will bring much joy. Enough of the basic structure of your temple is secure for such a prediction to be made, though we cannot foresee an occasional individual setback. You will come to feel in your heart and soul the reality of the temple you are helping to build, each one of you. We are not concerned with a large quantity of people who may sit and listen and not really benefit spiritually. The overcoming of a single fault, the full recognition of a single shortcoming, contributes more to the building of your temple and the Plan of Salvation than a large crowd at these sessions. Spiritual progress in one individual means more to us and makes us happier than lukewarm participation by the many.

Now I should like to ask a favor of you. Always glorify God; do not ever glorify me. For I am only a servant of the Lord, happy in my task. When you experience enlightenment as a result of the help I am allowed to give, thank God and only Him! Never forget that it is God who is responsible, that without His strength and grace none of His creatures could lift a finger.

Many people seek God in the wrong way. I will try to explain what I mean. On this earth sphere there is a considerable amount of disappointment. Sometimes human beings turn to God only because contact with other human beings proves to be unsatisfactory. Perhaps not enough love is forthcoming; perhaps fear and caution cloud the expression of the innermost divine spark. Contact with other human beings can be experienced as hazardous, not bringing the blessings you seek. You may be hurt. The person in frustration often turns to God. The feeling is, "God will not

disappoint me. God has enough love. God is far away and intangible: I risk nothing by loving Him. From human beings I experience only disappointment and hurt."

Now this, my friends, is the wrong way to seek God. It is infinitely better than the primitive reaction of blaming God for one's disappointments and the failures of others; the most primitive reaction is to doubt or deny the existence of God because of one's personal disappointments. The human being who does so has not even entered the school of life. To turn to God because this is less disappointing and hazardous represents the first grade of elementary school.

The way to seek God is out of the fullness of your life. The fullness of life means to enter life without cowardice, to open yourself to everything life may bring: hardship and joy, unhappiness and happiness, periods of darkness, periods of light, disappointments in other human beings, and unwaveringly trust again and again, with an understanding heart. Most of all, never, never be afraid of your own feelings and of life as it is. That is entering the fullness of life.

But if you turn to God because it is "safer" and because He represents a last resort, or second best, a refuge, He will have to show you that love does not work in such a way. Your tests will be many.

Perhaps you are not consciously aware of reacting negatively to life. Test your emotions and your fears of other people, the hazards and risks of life and love as you know them, and then ask yourself whether your striving for God does not amount to using Him as a substitute. This is not the only motive in your desire to find God. Motives can be mixed; they often are in your state of development. The pure motive will be conscious to you; for the impure motive, you must search within your soul.

"If we are disappointed," you may ask, "should we not then turn to God?" Yes, you should! But it depends again on how you go about doing it. If you pray to God in your disappointment, asking Him, "Father, help me find out what it is within myself that made such defeat inevitable. What can I learn from it? Help me to overcome my cowardice. Let me meet life with all its pains courageously." Then you do the right thing. But if you withdraw from other people, if you withdraw in fear from your own feelings while you are trying to believe that the reason for such inner action is that you can find God better by "renouncing the world," then you are misdirected in two ways: God is really a substitute for you; and secondly, you are lying to yourself.

It is not easy to find out the truth. These are subtle and hidden emotions, and only the most severe and sincere self-testing can teach you the truth about your soul-reactions. Do not be deceived by the part of you that seeks God in truth; look for the hidden part that does not. Do not ever forget, my dear ones, that your emotions are mixed. The conscious part that is right and pure does not eliminate the possibility of a hidden wrong reaction, emotion, and motive. So test yourself.

The best way to find God is always by learning to love other people. As you know, this is a long road. We have begun to work and are continuing to work on this. Nothing but love of your fellow creatures can open you to the fullness of life, which alone is the proper basis for finding the Lord.

Looking upon humanity, we of the spirit world often become sad. We see so many struggling men and women longing to be loved who do not know that what they actually long for is to love. It is just that they do not know it. The coarser matter of their soul, the layer that lies between the divine spark and the physical body translates the longing to love into a longing to receive love. In this layer exists the ego with all its vanity, pride, fear, and ambition. This ego layer believes that the best thing is to receive love without taking the risk of getting wounded; it thinks remaining aloof is a desirable state. In other words, you want to cheat: you want to receive without giving fully. You set limits. You calculate. You extend yourself only to receive love. And then you are bitter -- because it does not work; it cannot work. Even if occasionally this strategy seems to work, you are not gratified by the love bestowed upon you. Think about it. Has it not happened in your life that other people loved you as best they knew how, but since you were incapable or unwilling to love, their love was more of a burden than a cause for happiness? Something within you knows that you do not deserve love, and so you feel guilty. The more love is given to you, the unhappier you become if you are not able to overcome your ego, pride, fear, and the cowardice that allows you to cheat.

If you overcome a weakness and begin to give some love, even before you are capable of giving real love, your act of unselfish giving will bring you a feeling of happiness and security that never comes to you when you receive selfishly and greedily. I realize that these are old truths you have heard many times. You have to experience the same truths again and again so that they may become a living reality and do not remain mere words.

My friends, one of the most important practices on this path is the daily struggle to make or to receive enlightenment out of words you already know. "Oh, I knew that already," you say. "It is nothing new," and a door automatically closes within yourself. In this way you do yourself great harm. You should understand better. Do you feel and live what you think you know? To know in your brain is only the beginning. You have a considerable amount of knowledge in your brain that from our standpoint we do not consider knowledge. The knowledge you have in your soul, knowledge that penetrates your being through and through, forever a part of you, is comparatively small.

Now I want to say a few words about prayers. We observe you as you pray. You say the right kind of prayers; you are praying ardently, untiringly, even patiently for the things you should pray for. Yet it often happens that when your prayers are answered, you do not know it. You do not realize that events that appear to you as disagreeable tests are nothing less than answers to your prayers. You need to go through these tests before that for which you pray can come to you. But you do not know it; you think that the answer to your prayer should come in a certain way. You fail to consider that if you lack a fulfillment, or if any kind of hardship exists in your life, it is because you have violated some spiritual law. Therefore a block exists in you that does not allow the fulfillment to come to you. God answers your prayer by making you conscious of the specific difficulty standing in the way of your fulfillment. You could not become conscious of it unless the difficulty manifested in your physical surroundings. You could not become aware of and eliminate the self-created obstacle. We have friends here to whom such a thing has happened. But it does not occur to them that the unpleasant experience was the very answer to their prayers. Without this occurrence they could not have removed the obstacle they had planted between themselves and the infinite bliss that God wants all His children to enjoy.

Before I turn to your questions, there is one announcement I want to make: We would be very happy if you and/or your group would start a new activity. Whenever a friend has a problem and needs advice, offer your help regardless of whether this person works privately with me or not; a meeting should be arranged with the friends of the inner nucleus. At this opportunity the friend in need should present his or her problem as honestly as he or she knows how. And the group should deliberate on it, each giving an opinion from the point of view of what it means spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Ask yourselves what can be learned from it for the purpose of purification; what spiritual laws might be violated by this problem; what might be the best way to handle it; and so on. Essential at the start of such a meeting would be for all to join together in sincere prayer asking for divine guidance, inspiration, and enlightenment.

We have many good reasons to wish for the proper organization of such a service. We spirits of the world of God encourage humans to become independent. We do not like to be asked at the first sight of a problem, "What should I do? What would be the right thing?" Those of my friends who work with me privately will have noticed that I discourage such questions. If I were to tell you what you must do and how you must do it, it would weaken you. What I always do, however, is to show you first how to understand the inner causes responsible for the outer effect. I show you how to go about searching for such understanding. To achieve this purpose, it is essential that you talk openly about your problems. This in itself will shed a new light on the conflict in question and bring you deeper insights necessary for spiritual growth.

To ask and to obey is better than nothing. But to ask how to find one's own violations and how to change inner currents indicates the true and mature spirituality that we want for you. Only in this way can you remove the obstacles for your independent channel to open to receive God's will and hear God's answers. You do not have to be a medium for that. Every human being on the right road can receive answers from God. It is our job to train you, not to make you dependent and have you coming to us with every decision you have to make.

Opening a channel requires training and practice. What I have suggested will afford a very good opportunity for everyone exploring the causes and solutions of the inner and outer conflicts on the path in the right way. It will strengthen all of you. Such activity is another form of "knocking" in order to receive divine inspiration. After you have proceeded as far as you can among yourselves, I shall be willing to give you advice to show you the way. Such an activity will bring the friends in the group closer together, which is very important. The law of brotherhood will be furthered. It is so healthy for your soul to open itself to your brothers and sisters on this path with generosity and courage. Those who listen, advise, and deliberate will gain strength not only from what they themselves are able to learn but also from their helpful attitude and unselfishness. So this will work only for the good.

Not one of you should feel shy. If your shyness stands in the way, a good part of your vanity has not been overcome. If you cannot bring yourself to the point of discussing your problems with friends who are seriously endeavoring to advance on this path of purification and who honestly desire to help, divine grace will not come to you in the measure it would if you were to make the effort to overcome such vanity and pride. All faults bar the way to divine grace; every effort to overcome the slightest fault opens a door to grace. It is pride that makes you shy. I cannot stress it enough, my friends, and I cannot beg you enough to do what I suggest if you are in difficulty. Come to the friends of this group. Convince yourself how much God likes you to do that. You will

receive the fruits of it slowly but surely. A great many blessings will come to the group who helps in that way and to the person who seeks this help. Such regular service will strengthen the group as a whole tremendously, my dear friends!

Be in peace. Be in God!

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