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## PRIVACY AND SECRECY

My very beloved friends, you are blessed, once again.

Golden rays are streaming around you and fill your very being. In this lecture I want to give you yet another outline of divine living, a vision of the Christ consciousness that heals all the wounds of division, confusion, and unnecessary conflict. You may sense that the series of lectures I have given you this past working season was geared to open up new visions in several areas. These visions set the pace and the climate of the work we shall be doing in the next working season.

The particular sequence of lectures may appear, off hand, arbitrary and not necessarily connected, but upon more profound reflection you will see that there is a meaningful sequence and a connection between the topics. In fact, one could not be properly assimilated without the other. All of them form a comprehensive whole. A study in meditation will reveal how all these topics are intricately connected. Every single one of the topics, and all of them together, will open new channels of consciousness in you which, in turn, will make you capable of living the new life that is starting to evolve on your earth sphere.

Today I wish to explore the concepts of privacy and secrecy. Much confusion exists about these two concepts. This confusion fosters the forces of evil and prevents you from fulfilling all your needs and attaining true expansion. It also makes closeness and intimacy impossible, and closeness is surely one of your legitimate needs. So is privacy. If privacy and secrecy are being confused, either the need for closeness or the need for privacy must be shortchanged.

Privacy is a legitimate need of the soul. You need to be by and with yourself. You need time alone in which you can delve into your depths and find new levels of inner reality, undisturbed by even the most favorable influences and vibrations from others. At times you even need periods when something you essentially desire to share with all your loved ones needs to be kept to yourself until it ripens sufficiently. Whether it is a thought, a new state of consciousness, or an artistic creation, it may need time to complete itself before being opened to others.

Such periods of privacy do not indicate isolation or separateness. They merely mean that a time of being by yourself and with yourself, a state of aloneness, is necessary to find more of yourself. However, every divine reality also has a distorted, diabolic counterpart, and if privacy is being sought in order to avoid contact, a distortion is at hand. If you avoid privacy because the true meaning of the anxiety it may at first produce is not explored and understood, again, a distortion is at work.

Many people are completely oblivious to their own need for privacy. They may, at times, be alone as a result of circumstances beyond their control, but even then, they manage to clutter up

their inner being with surface thoughts, with outer or inner noise, to avoid the deep inner contact the soul craves. Human beings who live in perpetually crowded conditions may have produced these very conditions because they desire an outer reason for being prevented from being alone. However, other human beings who also live in such conditions manage to find inner and occasionally even outer privacy despite all the busyness surrounding them.

Those who keep predominantly to themselves may have created their aloneness precisely because of their fear of contact. But if fear of contact exists at all, it is primarily fear of contact with the self, and only secondarily fear of contact with others. Consequently, this aloneness will not fill the need for privacy. People who are alone because of fear of contact will remain alone without taking the opportunity to come closer to themselves, just as they will spend time with others without taking the opportunity to forge true contact and intimacy.

Now what about secrecy? Secrecy is never positive, at least not in its real sense. We are not talking of the so-called secret one keeps to prepare a lovely surprise for a loved one. This is not really a secret, for it is finally joyfully revealed. Secrets always hide something negative, otherwise they would not be kept secret. This is very important. Although the truth here is quite obvious, it is surprisingly often totally overlooked. Whatever the secret may be, if you look closely, it will not be difficult to discern the wish to hide something that is unpalatable to someone. Either you wish to keep something hidden from others, or another person wishes to involve you in hiding something negative or destructive.

If these secrets were revealed, they could be dealt with, they could be totally dissolved so that a beautiful, positive creation could take their place. But by keeping the secret, you maintain and nurture negative thoughts, dishonest actions, and destructive behavior patterns.

The person who has a stake in keeping something secret -- either alone or in conjunction with others -- is perfectly aware of hiding something negative; otherwise it would be unnecessary to keep it secret. To plead righteousness about keeping a secret is therefore absurd. But what usually happens is that privacy is used to camouflage the intent to keep secrets. In other words, secretive people will use the right and need for privacy to conceal that they really are keeping something secret. The weapon of the forces of darkness is always to confuse by using a truth to cover up a lie.

The true concept of privacy never implies keeping secrets. In fact, just the opposite is true. What is divinely inspired and ripens in privacy is later always opened up and shared with others. It is never meant to be hidden. Only dishonesty, lies, negative intentionality, destructiveness of one sort or another, need to be hidden from others. Nothing that is true and beautiful needs to be kept secret. Not ever.

Sometimes an excuse is used to rationalize keeping secrets: "If I reveal myself, I will not be understood," or "I will be unjustly criticized." This, of course, is not valid. For if one is in truth, understanding from others will not be important enough to create impenetrable walls between the self and others. If one is in truth, one tries to make others understand and to use their criticism as a tool to explore the reality of the situation one wishes to keep secret.

Those who keep a secret fear that they are not in truth, or they may even know it but have no intention of changing. They are dishonest because they know that others may react to what is

hidden, and they wish to avoid this. In other words, they wish the respect and love that they might not be able to earn if the secret were disclosed.

Keeping secrets is therefore always, in the final analysis, a theft. It is cheating to secure a result that cannot or will not come about if the secret is disclosed. Keeping secrets also avoids the effort and responsibility of finding an equitable, honest solution in which others can participate.

Secrets are always antithetical to relationship, to intimacy, to real and fulfilling contact. Secretive people are never fulfilled emotionally. They keep a wall of separation between themselves and others and then wonder why they feel so alone and misunderstood. It never occurs to them to put two and two together. They often even blame others for this state and use it to justify their secretiveness, instead of doing the only valid, meaningful and intelligent thing: spill out all secrets and make themselves as transparent as possible. This is not an easy or quick thing to achieve. It requires patience, time, effort, and all the good will that can be mustered.

Often an important reason for secretiveness is the fear of self-exposure. The fear says, "If I show myself as I really am, they will not love me." If this is the way you reason -- though it can hardly be called reasoning -- you ignore certain blatant facts. For instance, you assume that the love, respect, or approval of others is more important than one's own. You fail to see that the courage and honesty of transparency, no matter what shameful facets may have to be revealed, create more self-esteem than secretiveness ever could. Eventually the esteem and love from others must follow.

The Pathwork is clearly designed to gradually but surely eliminate all secrets. First you learn to stop keeping secrets from yourself. You realize how much material you had ignored, kept unconscious, secret from your conscious mind. Then you learn to apply the same honesty and openness you have acquired toward yourself toward others as well. If you continue, you cannot help experiencing this as the only way to be. Only this way can you fulfill your need for contact and live without fear and anxiety, without shame and hiding, without pretenses and façades. The relief of this kind of living is a much headier wine than any pseudo-solution could ever be. Those who have begun to taste it can no longer bear to revert to secret living for any length of time or in any respect, no matter what may come up.

If you have negative thoughts about others, suspicious opinions or accusations, instead of nurturing them secretly for yourself or sharing them with a third person as a mutually kept secret, you will bring it all out in the open. Doing so indicates that your will to be in truth is greater than your negative opinion, your accusations, your suspicions. You will proceed to explore what the particular truth of any situation is. You cannot fail to be enlightened with the real, peace-bringing, unifying truth if you are committed to it more than to anything else.

Wanting to preserve your secret, on the other hand, clearly indicates that you have no commitment to the truth, probably not even to the truth that you have a stake in maintaining your negative opinions, accusations, and suspicions, and that you desire to continue doing this precisely because you already know deep inside that you are not in truth, but you do not wish to admit this.

However, accusations that are made publicly do not necessarily indicate openness, the opposite of secrecy. They may merely mean that hostile and aggressive motives supersede secrecy.

The new man and the new woman are incapable of harboring secrets. Secrets cannot be carried in the newly emerging consciousness. They are experienced as an unbearable burden, which they actually are. The spiritual form of a secret is exactly that: a heavy burden. The more consciousness becomes enlightened, the more it is infused with the Christ spirit, the faster the burden will be dissolved in the most productive and creative way possible.

You have begun to experience this new mode of living in your own growing community. This is precisely what is taking place: an ever-increasing openness and a transparency in which all secrets of self and others are being experienced as insufferable burdens, as hindrances to light and love. The price for keeping a secret becomes too high, too absurd. Conversely, the cost of the effort necessary to open up the secrets, to enable the soul to stand clear and clean, visible for all to see, is never too high. Complete openness is the goal. It applies to all relationships: to man/woman partnerships, to every kind of friendship, and finally to the relationship between countries.

Keeping your negative aspects secret makes it impossible to reveal your best self. You feel embarrassed about yourself; your innermost thoughts, dreams, and desires feel shameful. To begin with, these aspects are often far from shameful or bad. They become negative because they are enveloped in a veil of secrecy. Merely believing that there is something to hide creates an aura of fog, a darkness that gradually encompasses the best in a person. It is therefore essential that this fog be lifted, whether what is hidden is actually negative or has only become so as a result of being hidden.

The process of dissolving secrets is the essence of the work you already do on this path. Muster the courage to expose what was hitherto secret. In no way will you ever regret this step. Having taken it, you will always find more love, more respect, more friendship, more help, more recognition of your real values, not to mention the relief of ridding yourself of an unbearable burden. The clarity, the lightness, and the freedom of no longer pretending in any way, are the direct doorway to the self-esteem you so desperately try to create and preserve by hiding.

If your self-revealing seems to elicit more criticism and censure than love and understanding, I would say to you, my friends, that you must surely have revealed yourself in a distorted way. It is easy to confuse the real way with the false one. The real way is the absolute willingness to follow the will of God; to let go of every cherished attitude, action, or goal that proves damaging and contrary to divine law; to use those to whom you reveal yourself as mirrors that help you see and reconsider some of your previous patterns. Their reaction should not be your inflexible rule to abide by but should make you thoughtful and truly willing to reconsider those aspects of yourself that you now see more clearly.

The false way of self-revealing is the childish, lower-self way that says, in effect, "If I show you my secrets, I demand that you approve of them and of me regardless of how destructive they may be. If you do not, I will accuse you of letting me down, and I will use this as proof that it does not pay to be open." So be careful, friends, when you assess the results of your self-revealing. The key always lies deep within you: Are you really moved by the sincere desire to be in truth and to do the will of God?

However, you also need to know clearly whether a real violation of your privacy exists. These are times when others try to pry because of their own negative motives; they may wish to uncover

something they can use against you to make themselves feel better, in a desperate attempt to enhance their deteriorated self-esteem. If you sense such motives, you should indeed close your doors to them. But bear in mind that unless you are willing to give up all secrets, and you have already begun to do so, it is extremely difficult to truly distinguish between actual prying and attempts to violate your privacy, and someone's genuine concern and honest desire to relate to the real you. As long as you have a stake in keeping yourself hidden, your assessment of others' motives will be very shaky.

Transparency is a new way of being, a habit that needs to be cultivated with patience, devotion, and perseverance; it is of great importance for you and those around you with whom you long to relate. It is an art that can and needs to be learned. Often your initial hesitancy and inhibitions can be removed when you learn how to express yourself and to convey what at first seems unconveyable. Has it not frequently occurred to you that you related a dream quite adequately, once you started it, although you were first convinced that it could not be explained? Thoughts and attitudes, experiences and feelings within the four walls of your inner self seem so vague, so unexplainable, that you do not even attempt to convey them. But once you know it is possible to do so, even if you cannot perfectly transmit all the nuances, you will make the effort to communicate and you will be surprised to what extent you can make yourself clear. By opening yourself up, you can reach others who may have quite similar inner experiences and thus can emotionally connect with you sooner and better than you may ever have suspected.

The point I want to make is that communication is an essential part of self-revealing and openness. Effort is needed, a lot of effort, but this effort will be highly rewarded. What first appears to be embarrassing only seems so because you believe that you cannot really put it in the proper words. Try, and the words will come. You will develop a new wonderful way of expressing yourself, and that in itself will enhance your sense of security and adequacy. Your initial inability to express yourself adequately is totally due to your unwillingness to do so and to let God inspire you. If you sincerely wish to reveal yourself, the Holy Spirit will inspire you with the appropriate words, and the walls you have built around you will dissolve.

Let us examine the quality of various human relationships in light of this topic. The most intimate of all relationships -- between two people who love each other and intend to share themselves with one another completely -- depends on the ability to be without secrets. This includes the outer ones as well as the inner, more subtle ones. If the risk is not taken to bring all aspects of the self into play, the expected bliss can never materialize. I have discussed this before, specifically in connection with the relationship between mates. I need to repeat it here in the context of the personality's general tendency to keep the self secret. The false belief that the self in its entirety is not acceptable must be challenged again and again. You need to take the risk repeatedly, step by step, until everything is out in the open. Then true sharing of the inner process can begin and an ongoing communication can be established.

At first you are bound to find that a great deal of residual material has accumulated. Once this is emptied out and all of you is made known, the process will take over. For the soul is not static or fixed. It constantly moves and changes, forever producing new inner experiences, new feelings, new thoughts, new dreams, new aims. Once you have emptied yourself, the dynamic process of soul development can be shared much more easily. The art of communicating, of self-expression, grows as you grow. Thus you become an increasingly open channel for divine inspiration; this will affect

your choice of words, the nuances as well as the tone of voice that also contributes to making yourself clear. What was once a confining prison of your inner self then becomes a wide open field that reaches the infinite horizons of divine possibilities and becomes ever more available to others. A state of mind grows in you which has nothing to hide, for which hiding seems utterly absurd, and being totally transparent is the greatest joy.

Only when you risk presenting whatever is in you now, will you know your real value. In this process you will inevitably find that there is so much more to you than you feared. How else can you find fulfillment and quench your thirst for being open with others, for attaining intimacy? This longing can never be fulfilled, no matter how hard you may try to deny it or appease it with false substitutes, unless you open yourself up.

The word "friendship" becomes a farce if you feel there is anything between yourself and the friend that has to be hidden. You will never really know whether you are loved and accepted. You must always fear and distrust, as long as you fail to take the risk of showing the friend all you are, all you have kept hidden. But this, of course, always includes the basic willingness to change a lower-self action, a lower-self goal, or a lower-self attitude. It requires the trust that higher-self goals and activities will provide much better what you need. If the trust is lacking, then this is what you need to share and perhaps receive help with.

This Pathwork is obviously designed to remove the secrets and to make your self available to others. If you look back on your progress so far, from this point of view, you will see quite clearly how you have liberated yourself and improved your life circumstances, gained new self-confidence and a sense of your own value, learned to trust God and life more and know of divine abundance. This progress came from your courage to reveal outer and/or inner secrets. Look at what you still hide and you will find the key to where you still block the fulfillment that awaits you.

When you look at your world, at the interaction between countries, you will see what an enormous role secrecy plays in the interrelationship between countries. Such relations are more marked by secretiveness, pretense, and hiding than any other relationship. Openness is not even considered viable among the governments of different countries. It is universally taken for granted that opaqueness is sound diplomacy.

In this area humanity is far behind where it could and should be; other areas of human relationships are much more advanced, although they, too, still leave something to be desired. In marriage, for instance, you will recognize to what extent mates keep secrets from one another -- not only about past and present acts and experiences, but also about thoughts and feelings. Is it any wonder that marriage does not seem to work very well and that mates cannot stay together? Yet the marriage relationship is much better off than the relationships among different governments, where most of the distrust, deceit, and strife exists. As long as humanity fails to envision an altogether new way of interrelating, peace cannot truly be established, sharing of God's riches cannot take place, justice and brotherhood will remain empty words.

In short, there must be a willingness to be open. It must be recognized that this is a prerequisite for a life of peace, joy, and harmony among all the peoples of this earth. Openness must then be painstakingly learned by the nations just as by individuals.

You are pioneers, bringing a new model to this world. In establishing your community life, you encounter the same basic problem that humanity as a whole encounters in establishing a society. You clearly see that those who keep themselves secret, those who do not share all of themselves, represent a dark barricade that hinders the growth of the whole. You need to make this understood by those who do not dare as yet to be real. You need to know it for yourself. You will learn increasingly, slowly perhaps, but surely, to present yourself in totality, without any false self-projections. You must understand that to whatever degree you do not trust the process of a secretless life, you encourage a false self-projection. Your secrets mean exactly this: "I want you to see me not as I am, but as I pretend to be." Once you clearly see this, you will understand the grave consequences of secrecy for your relationship with yourself, with others, and with God. You will see how it affects your entire outer and inner life, as well as those with whom you seek to establish a desirable relationship.

Try to visualize what life is like when you know that there is nothing to hide, ever. And when you feel there is something to hide, consider that perhaps what you hide is really something damaging to yourself and/or others. It should be revealed all the more because you need help in recognizing what makes you desire this act or attitude. You then need help to change your inner defense mechanisms so that you will no longer need to desire a destructive act or attitude. Your lower self must be revealed so that it can be healed and transformed.

Perhaps what you believe should be kept hidden is really a beautiful aspect of yourself that should be shared. Perhaps you only think your secret is bad and in reality you need the experience of exposing it before you can really be convinced that you have nothing to hide. Imagine the feeling of no longer hiding anything from anyone. Imagine the liberation of shedding a heavy armor. Imagine the joy and the healthy pride of holding your head high while knowing you can truly be open to all.

Only when this state of consciousness is achieved can your true enfoldment begin. Your limitless potentials for greatness, for creativity, for still-hidden talents, for your universality and uniqueness, for your essence and your beauty can stream forth only when the confinement of hiding is removed. The process of self-unfoldment begins with removing the walls of secretiveness. It continues with liberating the best in you only after this has been accomplished.

Of course, the process often overlaps and goes back and forth. As one layer or aspect of hiding is dissolved, new qualities and assets that you have never known begin to take shape. Then you return to other areas of hiding that you had not even been clearly aware of, so that more of your potential can begin to unfold.

Can you visualize a world in which no one ever hides anything from anyone else? Is that not paradise? This is the direction in which evolution moves, my friends. This is what the New Age signifies. How can the Christ in you truly manifest if you have a hidden agenda? How can your divinity unfold if you are not free and if you continue to project a false self into the world? Do not rationalize such projections by pretending to preserve your privacy. Look at the real reasons why you maintain this painful and unnecessary state of isolation and deception -- for that is what it truly amounts to.

There are three fundamental reasons for resistance to giving up secrets: (1) The fear that your lower self makes you all bad and, together with this fear, your unwillingness to risk the possibility that this may not be so; that others will not reject you, and that you will not find it necessary to reject yourself. (2) The ignorance that indeed there is a way -- which can be learned -- of communicating all that now seems incommunicable. The unwillingness to learn the process gradually, by small steps. (3) The fear of being too vulnerable when all the hard shells fall off. Secrets are certainly among the hardest layers.

The common denominator of these three factors is the resistance to going to God with all of yourself and to trusting His will. The resistance is perpetuated by your choice to follow the voices of the dark forces who inspire you to trust in your false, destructive, separating devices for safety and for the resolution of your problems. You need to become aware of these influences, and you desperately need to challenge and refute them. You have to choose new behaviors and seek new solutions.

Before ending this lecture, I wish to speak more about the third factor, the fear of vulnerability. This vulnerability goes beyond the obvious fear of being less protected from hurt and disappointment without the secrets. This fear is an outright illusion, easy to discover once you summon up the courage to do without it. But there is also another kind of vulnerability.

As you become more open, more accessible, new capacities of perception grow in you. What you previously perceived only vaguely becomes more and more acute, more clearly defined. This is immediately and directly beneficial in many areas of your life. This desirable result, however, is totally ignored by the personality because too much darkness and fog still cover up the reality. So you lack the incentive to use the new perception.

This newly-evolved vulnerability has another effect that is not immediately experienced as desirable. It is a grieving pain about the destruction caused by evil. It is healthy and good to allow this state to grow in you, to experience it fully. It manifests in different ways, and the more aware of your vulnerability you become, the more you will experience this very healthy pain. You may feel pain when you see God's gifts in nature willfully destroyed. You may feel pain about the suffering on this plane of existence. Take for example the suffering of animals who become the prey of other animals in order to sustain the greater life cycle and to fulfill their function. In one sense this suffering is certainly much less than the suffering willfully inflicted on animals by the indifference and cruelty of humans. But that animals have to go through this phase of their own evolution is painful, even though there is an intrinsic rightness about it. These animals are incarnated aspects of consciousness that need these experiences, but they are nevertheless, on the level of manifestation, much more innocent than man, who has a consciousness that gives him much more responsibility.

What I say here may sound contradictory, yet it is not. I must ask you to try to understand this from the depth of your soul, because true understanding will come from there. Compassion and love, gratitude for the beauty of creation, appreciation of and joy about it must also create a deep pain when something is destroyed, a pain that needs to be suffered. This pain is ever so different from the neurotic pain, the pain by association, the pain of masochistic self-punishment that identifies with what appears to be a victim. This living, healthy, loving pain is also the threshold to joy and ecstasy.

Another aspect of this pain is the recognition that untrue thoughts about your fellow human beings are damaging to yourself as well as others. Such thoughts may well be camouflaged and rationalized away. However, thoughts of maligning and unwarranted suspicion, the inner and/or outer acts of factual, psychological, emotional, and spiritual cheating, impose unfair disadvantages on others, and therefore also on the self.

As long as this pain is denied, the price becomes much higher, for such pain must turn against whoever inflicts it, or against whoever colludes with those who inflict the pain by passively standing by. Many self-defeating patterns are connected with pain you have unwittingly inflicted because you have not allowed yourself to know and feel them. It seemed too tempting to follow the way of the dark forces and too undesirable to give them up. You fear and avoid your own pain about causing pain to others. This then grows into debilitating guilt and indirect self-punishment. You also need to feel the pain that is independent of you, but can help liberate you by moving you to compassion, the pain you simply see existing in this earth-sphere.

So, my beloved friends, when the walls of separation and secretiveness fall from you, you step out into a beautiful world of light, of goodness, of singing joy, of eternal life, of fearless existence. This world can exist only in a defenseless person who is free from armoring, who does not deny the soft vulnerability that can experience the pain of all the suffering created by the forces of evil in this earth sphere. If you harden yourself against this kind of pain, you also deny the joy that is meant to be yours for all eternity. Allow this experience to strengthen your determination to become an ever stronger fighter with the forces of light.

The blessings of all the angels accompany you, the blessings of the Highest flows through them to you, enriching and guiding your life. The presence of the Highest, of the Creator, lives in your heart and soul if only you will see and feel it. Be always aware that you are here on this earth plane to find your true being and fulfill it for God. Live in Him.

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