

CONTINUE YOUR STRUGGLE AND CEASE ALL STRUGGLE

Divine and joyful blessings, my beloved friends. Your tasks are becoming more joyful, more fulfilling, more noticeably meaningful. Your inner paths bring outer meaning to your life. As your community grows, the cleansing process must be an inexorable byproduct, my beloved ones. As you cleanse yourselves inwardly and leave behind aspects of your personality that are not compatible with your newly awakening self, so must the entity Pathwork do the same.

Now we begin a new working season. Much expansion, excitement, fulfillment and many challenges await you. Even the unavoidable hardships must ultimately become steps leading to greater harmony and ecstasy.

In the great plan, also called the Plan of Salvation, the earth sphere is meant to change gradually into a more spiritual abode of unity, harmony and light. This cannot, of course, be a process given from outside. It can only come about through a transformation of consciousness in the earth's inhabitants. Transformation of consciousness comes about as a result of laborious inner work -- the work of self-confrontation and purification -- which leads to finding deeper inner levels of reality that were hitherto disconnected from your conscious being.

As the earth transforms, those individual consciousnesses who cannot and will not follow this process of growth and development will create a new abode, with conditions similar to those that still prevail in this earth sphere. However, these conditions have begun to change already among a relatively small section of the earth's inhabitants. As time goes on, the number of those who contribute to the change will increase. Your specific path is a potent agent to bring this change about in the shortest time. What might otherwise take many incarnations for the individual could be accomplished in one lifetime, if the pathwork is truly followed to its maximum potential. Such transformations have already been witnessed among you and are experienced by some of you as a strong sense of being reborn in this very lifetime.

I would like to discuss a particular aspect of this transformation of consciousness, giving special emphasis to what was previously discussed only in general. Humanity's greatest imprisonment, from which stems all fear and pain and suffering, is the duality in which the human mind is entangled. The mass mind then builds an environment and creates conditions that express this bent of consciousness. It is perhaps the most difficult task of the evolutionary journey to penetrate this seeming reality, namely, that the world is dualistic.

You seem to be put into an entirely objective world, all fixed and ready-made. All conditions and natural laws seem to be unalterable givens upon which your state of consciousness has no influence whatever. To submit to this false reality seems indeed the most "realistic" and sane acceptance of life. The problem is that to a certain degree this is indeed so. It is necessary to accept

the world as you find it and deal with it on its own terms. For even after your own consciousness begins to change and transcend this reality, the creation of the mass mind still remains intact. In that transitional state, the individual lives in both realities. He or she fully accepts the created, dualistic reality, but at the same time recognizes the new vision gradually emerging through the fog. Most of you know this new vision in your mind, but few of you have begun even occasionally to experience its reality: the absolute knowledge that there is only good, that there is eternal life, peace, joy, excitement, meaning, that there is nothing to fear, that there is no more pain. This state of ultimate reality also contains the knowledge that you create your world, your conditions, your environment. Rather than burdening you, this knowledge gives you an immense sense of liberation and safety.

Non-acceptance of the conditions of the dualistic world -- because of the vague knowledge of another state that can be attained -- is an aberration. It expresses the childish desire to gain omnipotence in a cheap and easy way. Those who indulge in it delude themselves that they can avoid -- by an outer act of sheer will -- the developmental stages that sometimes must include temporary suffering. Thus we have the apparent paradox that glimpsing ultimate reality in a false way leads to more unreality than not glimpsing it at all and fully accepting the conditions of the dualistic mass illusion. But when the limitations of these life conditions are fully accepted and the personality deals with them honestly, maturely, productively and constructively, then the inner evolutionary process continues organically and the mind begins to encompass other visions that were invisible before. To deal fully with your limited reality must include a process of stringent self-work, such as the pathwork offers.

Progress in this inner work brings about many changes -- changes of attitude, of intentionality, of feelings, opinions, of your world view and, finally, changes in perceiving reality. A simple and current example, on a very practical level, is precisely what all of you continually experience on this path. You start out seeing a certain condition in your life in a specific way. Let us say, you are convinced that circumstances victimize you, that other people are doing you a great wrong, that you have no recourse to change these conditions unless the others change their attitude and behavior toward you. Most of you have felt something like this. In such a situation you start out with a very firmly held conviction. Everything you can observe bears out this conviction. In fact, the more convinced you are, the more "proof" you will be able to collect as to the accuracy of your conviction. This self-perpetuating vicious circle, this law that manipulates your vision according to your conviction, is an ensnarlment of the mind that is very hard to overcome.

Only as a result of much goodwill on your part to open your mind, to let go -- at least temporarily -- of your conviction, will you begin to recognize new aspects that you could never see before. Perhaps you will see how you actively contributed to the situation that seemed to place all the responsibility on the other person. You may recognize, on even deeper levels, a definite intentionality to create a negative situation. This recognition will automatically shift the total picture. Not that it will place all the burden of guilt on you now and necessarily make a victim out of the previous villain, but you probably will see how you mutually affected each other.

This comprehension will open new vistas. You will soon come to recognize hitherto unsensed aspects of yourself and of the others involved -- both good and bad, favorable and unfavorable. Underneath the duality of good versus bad you will find one day an ultimate, unchangeable level of truth in which all is good in a new, different, more alive and very dynamic way.

I have used a familiar example that demonstrates the process of extending human vision to new realities. Here you can find that the previous limitation was inaccurate, mostly because of its exclusivity. You saw the picture out of context with some elements missing, and without cognizance of these the total picture was distorted. It was not false because your view was necessarily untrue in itself, but it was false because you left out essential elements that are necessary to view the picture in its totality. What I am trying to convey is that many levels of reality are valid about one and the same situation, condition, circumstance. By knowing this, you will beware of quick evaluations, and you will assume the responsibility to search, to grope, to make the effort to extend your vision.

The same process applies to the world and its natural laws, as you know them. Your world view is based on a very incomplete vision in which your limited perception filters what goes into your consciousness. You see only what appears most obvious and you see it on an entirely superficial level. But as you grow, as your perception of reality about your personal circumstances widens, so does your perception of creation begin to alter, to widen and deepen. You glimpse connections you have never seen before, and which are now as obvious as the limited reality you had perceived previously.

The dualistic world view seems an incontrovertible fact. Not to see your world in terms of opposites, of duality, appears the crassest form of delusion. And it is true indeed that on the level of appearance duality is a fact. Life seems to die, evil always lurks somewhere in the shadows no matter how much good also exists. Light opposes darkness, night opposes day, where there is health there is also sickness. Yet another reality awaits to be recognized underneath the level of opposites. Since living on the level of duality brings pain and strain, it is the soul's greatest longing to find the deeper level of truth. The longing, as I often said, exists regardless of whether or not a person is conscious of it. It fills the heart precisely because it is within an individual's potential to awaken into this new level of consciousness at some point of his or her evolutionary journey.

I have talked about this before. I mention it now because I wish to show you more specifically how to attain this new level of perception and of being. You must clearly understand that this goal cannot be reached by using the outer will alone. It cannot come about as a result of philosophical speculation or theoretical knowledge, or even as a result of specific exercises, methods or disciplines. The change of consciousness happens entirely due to an intensely personal purification process that, to begin with, always deals with the most mundane matters of your practical life, with your attitudes toward them and toward your surroundings. Practical everyday matters are always an expression of inner, subtle, and finally spiritual attitudes. To skip them and consider them irrelevant only leads to further separation -- the duality of spirituality versus practical life -- and therefore ultimately to a delusionary spirituality that is not grounded in the Now. This is why you find this path so intensely practical and utterly compatible with your life of matter, your daily activities and your goals. The path is not only compatible with your daily life, but it is a discovery and an expression of the most subtle spiritual -- or anti-spiritual -- attitudes.

Let us now attempt to be a little more specific about attaining the new consciousness in which creation is no longer perceived in terms of duality. Perhaps we should begin by pointing out how painful and fearful duality really is. For this is often so taken for granted that you cannot even perceive the pain and the fear. You do not know anything else. This is all there is, so how could

you even begin to chafe under it? The dynamics are similar to a child's hardly feeling his painful conditions simply because he does not know what other, better conditions might exist. To change existing conditions, one must feel them as so undesirable that the effort is well worth taking. But one must also know that they can be changed, that other possibilities do indeed exist.

Most human beings do not know that duality is painful, nor how painful it really is. Nor do they know that another perception and another view exist, another way of living, that totally eliminates this pain. Living trapped in the limited world of duality, you always fear the undesirable and strain away from it toward the desirable. This very straining is extremely painful and anxiety-producing, but it becomes conscious only after you have accomplished a great deal of crude purification work, such as you are involved with now. If you try to eliminate a specific strain before the purification work is fully part of your daily life, you will skip important steps and the process cannot take place in an organic, grounded way. So what I shall discuss now may not yet be appropriate for a number of my friends, but I believe it will help all of you to comprehend some of these aspects, even before you are ready to put the emphasis on this new phase on your personal path. If you can connect with some of my words it may help you to deepen your understanding of yourself already as you do the simple purification work.

In considering reality and the deeper truth we are obviously talking about different states of mind. If the mind becomes more firmly entrenched in the painful, fearful dualism through straining from the undesirable alternative, then it follows that you must give up the straining. Yet how can I say to you, do not wish for happiness as opposed to suffering, life as opposed to death, health as opposed to illness? You would hardly be human if you would not deeply desire happiness, life, health.

But there is a state of mind in which the straining relaxes, in which the undesirable can be dealt with in an almost similar spirit and attitude as the desirable. This may appear very strange to you now, but I truly say to you, my beloved friends, this is indeed so. Perhaps the first step toward this particular state is to pay attention to the byproducts in your feelings, thoughts and attitudes as you experience either a desirable or an undesirable state. If the desirable occurs, you are most likely to feel faith in the Lord, to experience His reality and connect with the Christ within. You can be joyful in the knowledge that all is well in this world.

I now address myself to individuals who do believe in and can experience occasionally spiritual reality beyond the earth reality, and not to people who have never as yet experienced this level of being. It is infinitely more difficult to maintain the same faith, the same knowing, when the undesirable experiences occur. The feelings immediately fluctuate like the needle in a compass. Just begin to observe your moods. When do doubts come up? What brings on the doubts? Are they not always in some way connected with whether or not the desirable goal is attained?

The Christed person does not experience these fluctuations. The outer experience in no way influences which level of reality he or she is connected with. It is indeed true that such a person reacts to pain no differently than to pleasure. In that way pain and pleasure become indeed one and the same. To put it differently, such a person transcends duality.

This kind of detachment from pleasure or pain is strongly fostered by Eastern religions, as well as by the Western mystics. These disciplines negate worldly fulfillment and consider it an

antithesis to the goal of spiritual self-realization. The pursuit of detachment leads to all the disciplines of asceticism and to deliberately-imposed suffering. Yet, valuable as these approaches may be up to a degree, does not the deliberate negation of the desirable lead to a similar state of duality, only approached from the other end? Whoever denies the undesirable is not much different from one who denies the desirable and does not permit himself to rejoice in it.

Another kind of contradiction also exists that has led to many confusions in the human mind, particularly among spiritual aspirants. If, as spiritual teachers and seers claim, God's will is your happiness, your human fulfillment, your health, your well-being, your healing when you are ill, your productivity and success in life, how then can you negate this life that the Creator has given you? Does it seem right to abdicate all material existence and deny its desirable aspects because you know that there exists a deeper, much more permanent state of mind in which you can experience life and fulfillment without the breaks that are part and parcel of the dualistic state of mind?

All these questions seem fraught with conflict and contradiction -- at least on this level of reality. In a deeper sense there are no contradictions at all. It is perfectly possible to rejoice in worldly fulfillments as expressions of inner states, while no longer straining toward one state and away from another. This latter attitude can exist only when you deeply know that ultimately there is the reality of God, of life eternal and of fulfillment and well-being in every possible way. Because you have attained a state without straining, you glimpse and finally experience this other reality. Or, you can relinquish the straining because you have glimpsed this state. It must be approached from both ends.

It would be virtually impossible to start out with an attempt to feel the same way about two opposites. You could not possibly make yourself react the same way to pleasure as to pain. It is a natural movement of the human manifestation to strain toward pleasure and away from pain. Even the often-encountered fear and denial of pleasure is essentially nothing but another version of fear and denial of pain. How then is one to start, you may well ask. As long as the strain between two opposites of a duality exists, you must live in fear, in inner tension, and you cannot realize your ultimate state of unity in which there is no death and no pain.

The way to go about it at first is to stand back and truly observe your reactions to pain and pleasure, to life and death. These reactions contain a great deal of material that you need to see clearly but that you generally ignore. Your reactions have become second nature, so that you cannot see the forest for the trees. Fear and desire are only the most common denominators that designate a host of other feelings and attitudes. In your fear of death and of pain, and in your movement to strain away from them, there is usually a great deal of anger, bitterness and resentment. These feelings are not directed toward a specific person or deity. They form a more general, diffuse, but nevertheless quite distinct state of mind. These feelings of bitterness and anger become so absorbed into the system that they themselves turn into the pain you strain away from. In other words, what started out as a small pain manifestation and what might dissolve smoothly and relatively soon, becomes more firmly entrenched and aggravated. It is, once again, not so much the angry feelings themselves as their suppression and repression that cause the strain. The fact that you are unaware of them and they can therefore exist underground causes the damaging effect. Therefore you need to make these reactions very clear and conscious.

This is in a certain way more difficult than with anger directed toward specific individuals and specific events. The latter may contradict your idealized self-image, your moral standards, your overall personality, but the former anger feels very irrational and unreasonable. An ordinary person may fear that it is a symptom of insanity to rile against what life is known to be. How can you "reasonably" resent the existence of death? How can you be angry about it? How can you even be angry that you, like all other humans, fall occasionally ill and suffer pain? Yet there exists a rage toward life and creation in all human souls before realization of the unitive, deathless, painless state has been attained. The feeling is, if it were articulated: How can life -- God -- be so cruel as to impose at the end of one's existence an inevitable event that is unfathomable, that is totally unknown, that is deeply threatening because it may be the end of one's being?

No matter how certain individuals who have come to embrace atheism claim to have accepted the idea that they will no longer exist once they die, in this very "acceptance" lies the ultimate rage. Atheism itself is a manifestation of extreme bitterness against a creation that seems so utterly senseless and arbitrary that no recourse exists. Atheism is the movement that cuts off any sensibilities and sensitivities to the perception of deeper and different realities.

There can never be a genuine "acceptance" of ending one's being. Such false acceptance is always either an angry, bitter resignation or despair about life and its pains. At the same time, accepting eternal life can also come from identical reasons of fear. So you need to go through your inner fear and your previously unconscious anger, bitterness or rage at life for imposing death and pain on you, for putting you in a position in which you find yourself helpless against these common human experiences. As you become aware of these feelings and accept their apparent unreasonableness and childishness, you will then be able to make new connections. You will see how these unrecognized feelings have channelled themselves and in what particular way they have found expression. Since this kind of deflection can never lead to clarity and truth, to harmony and unity, the deflection leads you further away from the fulfillment of your soul's longing -- namely the real inner knowing of the unitive state.

The less aware you are of what you feel about these very general existential matters of life, the more irrational these feelings will become; the less you can permit yourself to face them -- or so you believe -- the more deflected they will be. You become more ensnarled in the dualistic state with all its painful strains and anxieties. Denied fear creates more fear. Denied longing and desire create anxiety, not peace. Only the courage to go through these feelings will purify them until they emerge as gold does in the hands of the alchemist. Both the fear and the desire will become a driving force, in a most positive sense, to find your longing, to find that in your longing exists a kernel of true knowing about the reality of fulfillment.

From this state of transmuting your irrational feeling comes, first slowly and with many interruptions, a state in which you want life not because you fear death, but because you know that there is no death. You know that leaving the body brings a better life. These words have often been spoken but they are rarely experienced as inner truth. To do so, a specific approach on your path, such as I outline here, must be pursued. There is a vast difference between hanging on to life because you fear annihilation of all you are and have become, and affirming life because you cherish the task your life on earth means. You may rejoice in bringing parts of the greater, real life into this limited dualistic plane and in thus spiritualizing the matter you temporarily inhabit.

The same applies to pain and painful experiences. If one suspects pain to be the ultimate reality, there must be a lot of anger connected with experiencing it. If pain is assumed to come only to life's stepchildren, this, too, must create bitterness and rage. Often, these feelings augment the pain, extend it, until the pain can become the medicine it is meant to be. Then you can use it as the indicator of these other feelings, so as to ferret them out and become acutely conscious of them. If you defend against pain even on the deepest possible psychic level, a tightening occurs that prevents healing. Healing requires a deep -- and more than physical -- relaxation of the entire human system in order to connect with the ever-present divine healing currents that penetrate all that is. A system that is defended against common human experience such as pain, suffering and death, or against one's own feelings of rage and bitterness about what seems insane to resist and oppose -- is in a state of tension and therefore unable to heal itself.

The state of deep relaxation of body, mind, and the feeling self brings about the attitude I described at the beginning of this lecture, a state that it may seem impossible ever to attain. This kind of equanimity does not express a disregard for earthly pleasure and life in the body, but it no longer fears their absence. People in this state do not rush into death and pain, but feel an inner peace because the glimpses of Reality follow more quickly in succession. This is so because they have begun to observe closely their reactions to their fears and desires in connection with life and death, pleasure and pain. As these observations become more honest, more clearly defined, more detached -- while that which is being observed is not confused with who the person is as a whole -- a new state of mind, the unitive state of mind, is automatically and inexorably, if ever so slowly, ushered in.

So, my beloved friends, try to think about all this and begin a new outlook and direction, wherever possible, on your individual paths. It will prepare you for the great fusion that must ultimately come about for each created being, a fusion that no longer knows the pain and separateness of the dualistic state of mind.

As you search in this direction, you will also find, once again, a "reverse unity" which, in its own way, will help you to understand the nature of your mind that is steeped in dualistic confusions. This is the fact that every so often you believe you fear one end of the spectrum and strive for and desire the opposite end of it. But as you confront your real feelings, as opposed to your illusion about yourself, you find that you fear the apparently desired end at least on one important level of intentionality perhaps every bit as much as that which you consciously fear. So you realize the "unity" of fear. Life is feared as much as death, pleasure as much as pain, success as much as failure. Out of this "reverse unity" a real unity can grow, when you comprehend the nature of the fear at both ends of the spectrum. As you get in touch with both fears, you have inadvertently attained a certain measure of equanimity. The strain automatically relaxes and you are then confronted with the issue of faith. There comes the point on your path when it is a question of just that. Do you wish to be open to your surrounding universe and look at it from the point of view of justifying faith? Do you only see, perhaps wish to see in anger and bitterness, the out-of-context fragments of life that seem to imply cruelty and meaninglessness? This question may occupy you over years of serious and beautiful struggle, the most noble struggle in the human soul. But the time must come when inner, deeply experienced answers will appear.

Negation of truth, beauty, love, and the meaning of creation always stems from bitterness, fear and anger. These attitudes can only produce more justifications of such negation, hiding the vistas

that harbor the most realistically grounded affirmation of all opposites -- of life and death, pleasure and pain, light and darkness.

When you can maintain this vision even while in pain, when you can know that God does it right even while you face the Great Unknown -- however near or far it may be -- your mind will be stilled. The struggle that attempts to find a way out of the pain of duality, only to draw the net tighter by the very nature of the struggle itself, will have ceased. The tense movement away from one and toward another "goal" will cease and the underlying unity of all life will be experienced.

Do not confuse the ceasing of a particular level and kind of struggle with apathy, passivity and lack of initiative, however. You know very well how important your committed active effort is, how noble your struggle, as I point out again and again. Struggle on one level, in a certain way, is necessary. It is the inevitable prerequisite for plowing through the mazes of the mind. Struggle on another level, in another way, is the movement that ripples the water and prevents the peace that flows from the Most Holy.

Right here is another of the dualities that exist in your world: about struggle. Many spiritual movements totally negate its necessity and advocate the detachment, not only from worldly matters, but from all striving. They are completely correct in that they know what I attempt to make you see here. They think of that level where fear and desire annihilate unity and trap the mind into deeper illusions of the world. But they do not connect with that level of the personality that needs to strive and struggle. They ignore that there exists a healthy and constructive struggle. The pitfall of this approach is that through its very one-sidedness it leads, from a subtle direction, again into more duality and thus perverts the peace that may be experienced, at first occasionally, into a passive standstill.

Then you have spiritual approaches that advocate the struggle and the work. They, too, are correct. They know the necessity for it and help the followers to summon the energies and the stamina. But they often ignore that other level, where struggle defeats the purpose and only ripples the waters more stormily.

To you, my friends, I bring the truth of both ends of this particular human split. Continue your struggle and cease all struggle. Grope for where struggle must continue and where it must cease. And you will experience at some time the incomparable peace of no longer fearing what you do not want and no longer reaching anxiously and strenuously for what you do want. You will know that all that could ever be desirable is right here, attainable right now, ever-present at the tips of your fingers. All that you fear and strain away from is nothing but illusion, even though you may be in the midst of experiencing it. So you will truly become still and know God. You will know God in all that is, in the best and worst, in what you want and what you do not want. Both are what your deeper self knows is intensely desirable, much better than what you think you want and not at all what you fear.

This is but a vague outline for your further path, perhaps a whiff that can be caught now. Even that vague gleaning will prepare you better for your further glorious path, my blessed, beloved friends. You all live and move and have your being in the Christ consciousness, in the Christ Principle!

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