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- *Rereading, pondering, and sharing these messages*
- *Putting faith into action*
- *The balance between uncertainty and conviction*
- *Prayer unites souls*

God is indeed with each of you and you are surrounded by God's light. You are truly a unit at this moment. It makes no difference how long or how short the time you have spent together. There is a common bond that you are aware of that brings you together, and then you go forth on your own journeys.

It is our prayer and our intention that somehow in the midst of all your activities a piece of what you experience in these groups remains with you. It is so easy to put aside that which you know, to somehow forget about it, becoming overwhelmed by the needs and pressures that assault you on a daily basis. Despite those demands on your attention, all of us who are assembled in a great gathering at this moment wish that you would take more opportunity to reflect upon these experiences, the insights that you have.

Much that you are given through this sharing with us remains dormant until such time as you are really ready to grow again. It is good that you transcribe all that is given to you, for the real value of those transcriptions is only realized when you return time and again. Your insights deepen with familiarity. There is certainly much that you can take with you from a one-time reading, but that is but a shell of what is contained within. You should each make more opportunities available to yourselves to consider carefully that which is offered to you.

There are indeed many books about this issue of spiritual enlightenment, channeling. The books that are available speak their own particular language of communication. For some, a good percentage of what is available has little meaning, but for others, that very group of books is of crucial importance. There are never too many books on a subject; there are only too few seekers.

On occasion, each of you has been motivated, at least in thought, to share your own sense of spiritual contact, of a connectedness, of your experience with this group or other like groups with others. We would encourage you to do so, not from the perspective of proselytizing, but merely sharing—sharing what is important to you, sharing what has meaning for you. What we offer you is really a potential, but it is you who take that potential and grow from it. This growth can only come from further considerations about what is presented to you.

In our last message, we again traversed the subject of faith and belief. It may seem somewhat petty to make such a distinction, or academic, somehow of little consequence. The distinction between the two is an important one, however, because what is essential in your life is the *application* of faith, not merely its acknowledgment.

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Your commitment to application is much stronger when that commitment is based on firm awareness, a faith grounded in experience. Commitments based on hope often begin with similar fervor but lose momentum because of lack of a sufficient foundation.

You live lives to grow in faith, but you also live to act in faith. It is the action that you bring to your lives that enhances and gives meaning to God's presence. You may talk endlessly about the importance of God in your lives, but if you do nothing that demonstrates that importance, your words are empty. It is commitment to action, ultimately, that provides the grounds for your own spiritual development and the development of others.

In countless opportunities that we have had to share with you, much emphasis has been placed on the application of your faith. The importance of action has been underscored. That action of course takes many varied directions. Action may indeed be doing something which is observable that interacts directly with another or on behalf of another, but action may also lead to prayer, prayer offered in solitude with no one to observe. The act of prayer is in itself placing your faith into an active expression.

Being with another who is suffering is acting with faith, for you are acting through compassion. You are acting through a personal acknowledgment of the importance of another. That is an action based on faith. Being there to hear what another wishes to say is an action based on faith. Although it is quiet and outwardly passive, it is still an application of your faith. The most important word here is action, and it comes from your commitment to making life better for another human being.

We have mentioned in the past that there are those who choose a life devoted entirely to prayer—prayer alone, not corporate. While that is indeed valuable and enhances spiritual development, it is even more important to allow yourselves the opportunity of exerting personal action beyond prayer. This is not to reduce the value of prayer, but rather to emphasize the reality of a spiritual life that encompasses prayer as part of an even larger commitment. Prayer is essential, but it is not the beginning and the end of all that governs a life. You help another through your prayers and that is action, but you help another also on many different levels, and it is in your participation in these levels of compassion and service, for example, that your spiritual growth takes on greater proportions.

There is much in your lives that you cannot really know for sure. Uncertainty is important to life. Your lives would have much less value if they were centered only upon full knowledge. The act of living life while having significant questions is an important part of that experience. There is nothing inherently wrong in that part of your lives based on belief, as we have defined it, as opposed to faith. Often it is out of belief or out of hope within an environment of uncertainty that the vision of God appears.

Faith can grow out of belief or out of hope. The two are not mutually exclusive. Both are essential to life. You should therefore embrace those moments when you are

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really unsure, when you have no vision, only a hope, for those moments become for many the garden from which faith springs.

Your lives continue to blend uncertainty with conviction, and that balance is essential. It is not so difficult to live with conviction as it is with uncertainty. Those are the challenges that we speak of as being so valued, so important for you. But through your uncertainty as your convictions become formed and your sense of vision becomes clearer, allow yourselves to be moved toward action. It is really an unbroken line of evolution that we speak of. Uncertainty, doubt, vision, commitment, action—these are the pillars upon which a successful life can be built.

It is most joyful to us when you pray for our growth and for those who have joined us, for you are acknowledging the reality of our lives. You are recognizing a vision which is beyond your own life. The souls of each for whom you have prayed are always with you, even when you are not meeting in such a group as this. The mere act of prayer brings the soul of another nearby. There is a union which takes place between you and the soul of another. That union is intense in its brilliance and warmth and is recognized by all on our side.

We pray that you will continue to move from uncertainty to conviction, commitment, action, and that you will allow us to serve as guides, leading you through that action, leading you to a stronger sense of your spiritual selves. You are never alone. You are constantly in our presence, just as you are constantly in God's presence.

We pray for your growth. We pray for your compassion, for your reaching out. We pray for your expression of love in all of its forms. Allow yourselves to embrace the world around you, and allow yourselves to see in that embrace the brilliance of God.

Amen.