

February 13, 1981

- *Accept differing perceptions of God*
- *Beliefs are not chosen*
- *Serving another is serving God*

God surrounds you with light which you so brilliantly reflect at this time. We all rejoice in your unity at this moment, in your unity of spirit and faith and love and hope for the future. As we have said before, we see the group continuing to expand. The strength of your light reaches so many others, as you have come to understand. The light of your spirits draws others like a magnet, and together your combined light grows brighter and more steady.

Each of you converges at this point in your lives from directions far apart from one another. Think of the backgrounds you have experienced as individuals, and imagine yourself tracing a line through the continuity of those experiences, bringing each of you together as you turn your prayers to God. The pattern which grows from the directions of your lives is complex, but the direction, the end point, is a unified one. What you imagine by picturing such a connection of life events can be applied to imagining the direction of development for all souls experiencing earthly life.

Progress is made from so many different viewpoints, but the end result is always the same. It is a concentration of a deep awareness of the reality which is God. Because souls approach God from different viewpoints, their perceptions of God, their experiences of God, will be different. We spoke of this difference of perception when you first met as a small group. It bears repeating, however, that as you come to know God, you gain your vision from your own perspective, and because each perspective differs, the visions will differ.

Despite the seemingly incompatible views or experiences of God from one person to another, they are, nevertheless, accurate. You speak of the importance of tolerance in your dealings with others. It is a difficult task and it is spoken of most frequently in terms of the matters of daily living and earthly concerns. But the same principle applies when you try to accept another's perception of God as valid. When you speak of God to another, you cannot hear as the other hears. You cannot receive the idea as the other receives the idea. For that reason, it is so difficult for you understand and fully accept the God-like experiences of others.

Since you cannot share their perceptions, you must accept them as they are. You cannot be critical of another's viewpoint of God. Their viewpoint is not of their choosing. They merely experience it. Of course, there are many who wish a deeper understanding of God, and they choose to look with more perception, but the direction from which they approach God is not of their choice. They are led as you are led. If you seek to share your faith with another, it can only be shared through the demonstration of

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love. That is really the common bond which unites all of the strings indicating the many directions of all souls in their motion towards God.

We have explained to you so often many ways of showing love to another, either through prayer or action, but it is equally important to recognize that love is virtually the only common bond among all people. Of course, there are times when that bond is not visible. It is not visible when there is jealousy, hate, greed and anxieties. But notice we say it is not visible. We do not say it is not there, for that bond is always present. You may respond to it or reject it. You may ignore it, but you cannot rid your souls of that element which unifies all.

God works through people. People are important for the completion of God's work. In addition to providing your soul with an opportunity for growth, the purpose of your life is to serve as a vehicle for transmitting God's love to another. You may have experienced moments when you felt God working through you. This may not be new to you, but it must be reemphasized that you are essential to God's work. You are a part of God; everyone is a part of God. By serving another, you are serving God because the other is God just as you are.

We see all of you growing in strength. We see your growth through challenges and through prayer. Search for opportunities to serve others. Be sensitive to the many directions which provide the source for moving toward God. Be willing to express your perceptions of God with no fear of rejection or misunderstanding. It is God who presents the picture. It is you, however, who are a part of that picture. You become as actors on a stage; it is God who wrote the play.

Be uplifted by your perception of God. Be grateful that so much has been shown to you, and be tolerant and helpful and loving towards those who share the same quest as you.

Your lights are bright. They are strong and colorful and they emit great warmth. Live with the recognition that each of you has the blessing and the gift of warming another's soul. Live God; don't merely talk God. Share God. God is not for you alone but is a part of all. God surrounds you with radiance and love and constant peace always.

Amen.