January 9, 1987

- *The soul's development and connection to God*
- *The effects of negativism*
- *The importance and way of strengthening the soul*
- *True compassion is spontaneous*
- *Ways of achieving peace*

God is with you and supports your souls with God's light of love and peace. Your souls respond in very direct ways to God's presence. Some of these responses occur without being initiated by your own prayers or activities. Your souls are not some kind of inanimate existence that somehow exists only as you permit it. Your souls have lives of their own. As you know, there is much influence or direction which you exercise on the development of your souls. But your souls indeed have very real lives which to a degree are somewhat independent.

There is a very natural connection between the lives of your souls and the life of God. It is a kind of response which could be likened to a magnetic response. In the presence of a strong magnet, iron is drawn closer. In the presence of God your souls are drawn—they are drawn toward God, but they are also drawn towards one another.

As you know, your souls are a kind of connection which each of you has to infinite life, for your souls have always existed and they will continue forever to exist. Humans cannot comprehend infinity, and therefore it is difficult to grasp the concept of an infinite life for a soul. The soul has always existed because God has always existed. There was not a beginning and suddenly God began. God has always been. God's life is really a complete circle; it is a complete sphere. Each of your souls is but a fragment of that circle or sphere, containing in it as fragments every element common to God. As a result, there is no essential difference between the reality of God and the soul which is in each of you.

The connection between your souls and God is much more elemental than the concept of personality, of wishes or desires. It comes down to the issue of love. Love is love whether it exists in the soul or whether it is part of God. How that love is manifested gives an individual characteristic to that soul and ultimately to the human to which it is attached. But taken down to its essentials—the permanent part of the soul—there is no distinguishable difference between the contents of souls and the content of God. You have heard it said before that all humanity is divine. It is this special connection to which we refer.

There are no two souls in their current development who are alike any more than there are two people who are completely alike. The soul grows, it evolves, it develops a personality. Yes, a soul has wants. A soul has objectives, desires. A soul is aware of its surroundings and responds to its surroundings. But the development of this soul, the <u>development</u> we underline, is really a function of your human lives. Its personality, not

its responses necessarily—it responds to the presence of God whether you are aware of God's presence or not—but the characteristics of that response are greatly controlled by your experiences in human form.

This concept may be difficult to follow, but if you accept the inevitable truth that your souls are infinite in their lives—having no beginning, having no real end—then you cannot believe for a moment that your souls only respond, only move forward, as a result of what you do. If you are responsible fully for the activities of your soul, then before you existed your souls would have had no activity, and logically therefore there is a sense of prior inactivity and post activity, the transition occurring at the onset of your own lives. Since souls are permanent, their existence was a fact long before your own lives began.

Because spiritual life begins before human life, the spirit has its own sphere of activity and independence of sorts, one could say. When you sleep, for example, you are not consciously trying to do things and think things which would enhance your soul's development. You may be essentially unconscious, but your soul is active, your soul is growing. Your soul is drawn to God's light as a flower is drawn to sunlight. For many, spiritual growth is easier for the soul when the body is asleep, for there are many whose lives are conducted in ways directly opposed to the wishes of God. Those lives can serve as inhibitors to the growth of their respective souls. And therefore, in a period of rest or sleep when individuals are not in control of all that goes on around them, the soul becomes freed to respond to God's light. This is not a metaphor. It is precisely what happens.

Your guides locate you. Your guides recognize you, not by appearance, for we don't see your physical appearance. We see your light. We recognize the individuality of that light. The light that we see is emanated from your soul. The light comes from heat, you might say. A warm object becomes warmer when in the proximity of a great heat. Whatever else may happen, the heat is absorbed. It is exactly this which happens to your soul in the presence of God. A life lived according to God's wishes is a life of transparence. This transparency enables the soul to be in direct contact with God's light.

An individual who lives a life full of negativism functions as a kind of shield placed between God's light and the soul's light. This is where your lives become so important to the development of the soul, for they can facilitate the soul's natural tendency to be drawn to God or they can hinder that tendency. Nevertheless, the response of that soul is a response which is natural to it just as the plant's response is natural. When you cover the window, the plant's response is no longer possible. When you cover your soul, the response of your soul cannot be forthcoming.

Much of what must be accomplished in life is the enabling of the soul to exercise its natural response to God. God's light is constantly there, and in an environment without hindrance the soul can flourish and expand and increase its light. It becomes stronger and more healthy. It maintains that energy of light. There are times in all lives

when you serve as a kind of shield, preventing God's light from being a part of the nourishment of your soul. But the brilliance of your spiritual selves contains within it the energy necessary to maintain itself—not necessarily to grow, but by the same token it will not wither. The stronger the soul is the more strength it has when the shield is present.

How does all this relate to your lives? You know the purpose of your lives is the development of your spiritual selves, your souls. But you must also recognize that as your souls become strengthened, the character of your lives becomes richer. All that you do to foster your spiritual growth will serve you at times when you function as shields between God's strength and your soul's strength. Your souls being stronger, you will be more able to handle the difficulties of life. It is like putting money in a savings account—you are gradually accumulating spiritual strength for the times when you need it. Without such spiritual accumulation, life for many can be crushing.

You may ask how you can live your life to provide this accumulation of spiritual energy for your souls. First, you must seek peace within. You cannot achieve peace which is unending. There will always be times in your lives when peace is sought after rather than cherished. But you must nevertheless seek ways of achieving a kind of peace which provides you with a perception of your surroundings which is far more vibrant than otherwise. For many such an inner peace may be very brief. However brief, it still must be cherished, it still must be recognized, and you must find ways of recapturing it.

Prayer is really the only effective means of achieving those moments of peace which strengthen your spiritual lights. When such peace is achieved, you are able to expand your lights as love to another. You cannot really offer love when you are in turmoil.

True love is compassion. You can be concerned for the life of another, yet not be compassionate. You can work for another's benefits yet have no compassion. You can spend days in great effort to make another's life more pleasant, and yet have no compassion. Much compassion, much of what is done in life is done out of a feeling of duty motivated by guilt. There is no compassion in duty so motivated. Compassion is never generated through guilt or a feeling of necessity.

Compassion cannot be held back—it pours forward. Compassion is a very natural outpouring of the soul. When you respond with compassion to another, it is automatic—it pours out. It is not planned—it is spontaneous in all respects.

To be compassionate therefore necessitates peace within. Peace within is achieved through prayer. It is that state of peace allowing a compassionate response to another which serves as a clear window for your soul's natural response to the constant presence of God.

So it is peace that comes first, but it is love which is the response. All begins with prayer. You see your souls indeed have natural responses, they have lives of their own,

and you must each work to allow that independent growth, if you wish to call it that, to proceed unhindered.

Some of your conversation this evening relates to prayer, to the functioning of faith in life, to the impact of such faith in the world. All is indeed possible, but it must be set into motion by the principles just outlined. You feel that humanity can accomplish anything once the need is sufficient, and to a degree that is right. The issue is not so much whether humans can achieve what they wish. The issue is more basic than that. It is really defining what it is that humans wish for. For some the wish is for peace. For some the wish is control over environment. For others the wish is for the destruction of evil. It is important that all have goals, but it is not essential that the earthly goals for all be the same, except for the achievement of peace.

There are many ways of achieving peace. One is through prayer, quiet prayer. For others, it may be through the destruction of the means of war. For yet others, it may be the elimination of that which harms the environment. And for others, it may be the providing of elements necessary for the positive development of all life, a life void of suffering, cold, sickness, and despair. There are many ways of skinning a cat, you say. There is much truth in this. What you search for is a means for peace, but you achieve it by your own individual fashion. That's what makes people different and nations different.

Much of our existence is spent learning. Yes, we do learn more about peace. We do learn more about the means of offering love. We learn about the meaning of compassion. We learn about the brilliance of God's presence. We accommodate that brilliance slowly. We cannot take it in all at one moment. It is a long procedure for us. So life for us is a learning experience as it is for you, and as it was when we were in human form.

Awhile back we said that all that you carry with you to us is love. That is truly all there is in life in the end. You carry with yourselves a capacity for love. There is nothing else—no possessions, no money, no power, no influence—only love, and it is that love which is nurtured by us. As you join us it is that love which is nurtured by our guides at the next level of our development. It is ultimately that love which brings us into total union with God's light which is complete love. Love is attracted by love.

Your lives therefore should be governed by love. Nurture it, help it to grow, give it away, share it with others, be unselfish with it, never be self-serving. Consider the unending chain which is created with love and your association with that chain. There is no higher calling than love.

We bless you now with that unending chain of love and the peace which is reflected by that love to all of you.

Amen.