

February 1, 1980

- *Union with guides is total*
- *God plants questions in your consciousness*
- *You influence God's power*
- *Many avenues to God, therefore be tolerant*

God surrounds you, uplifts you, and penetrates your very being with blessings.

We here are so joyful to see you gather once more. The development which you achieve, the increase in the richness of your lives, is the most important purpose for which we devote our efforts. Your successes are our successes; your joys, our joys; your frustrations, our frustrations; and your concerns, our concerns. God enables us to share in your lives completely and with no barriers. We are as much a part of you as your own sense of self, of life, of surroundings. We share in your lives because we are your lives. The union with you is total. Though we have other responsibilities, we continue always in your presence. Each of us, you and we, is bathed in God's light. We can see that light more clearly than you, but despite the physical shrouds which limit your vision, you are as much in God's light as we.

Life then, in its purest form, is a lifting of your limitations allowing God's light to enter your darkness and illuminate your lives. The process of illumination is a slow one and it does not come without effort. This effort is exerted through prayer, through reflection and questioning. God not only welcomes your questions, God plants them in your consciousness as a means of lifting those shades. By questions and doubts each of you grows in understanding and insight. It is as if a teacher were to ask his or her students leading questions. The questions are by nature controversial, and while some answers may be forthcoming, it is the attitudes and insights to an approach which are sought. You may not discover completely acceptable answers to the questions which you pose, but you will grow by their consideration. Remember that what is important is growth, no matter how long it takes as you perceive time. In life it is not the arrival which is of highest importance, it is rather the becoming which you must be aware of.

Specific answers are like a finish line. It is not important always to pass the finish line more quickly than another. It is your participation which counts. Each of you who wish to serve God must continually find ways of becoming or participating in your dealings with others. Providing pat answers through a sense of exclusive knowledge serves neither you nor another. It is important that you instill in others a sense of the quest, the search for truth. In searching for God's truth, you will not one day arrive at the destination, at the finish line, but the action of your search will provide momentum in the proper direction. Your challenge is not to discover but to search.

All of this may sound self-defeating, pointless, but in fact the activity of searching is as essential in your lives as it is to ours. We search, we study, thereby achieving greater insight but not full knowledge, for such completeness of understanding belongs

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only to God. As we draw closer to God, we see God's light more clearly until eventually we become a part of that light. Becoming a part of such radiance does not mean being that radiance completely. Therefore, as we gain in understanding and as you become more aware, all of us become more a part of that light and the light shall grow brighter. As you become more attuned to God's will, God's power on earth becomes greater. Each of you then has a direct influence on God's power over all people. You are a part of that power, of that light. Because of your progression toward God, others around you will become more aware of God's presence in their lives.

It is a natural question to continually ask, "How do I become closer to God?" The answers to this question have resulted in the many religions of the world as well as the many interpretations of the Bible within the Christian tradition. All interpretations have a measure of truth which gives meaning to the lives of countless numbers of people. As you search, as you question, comparing and contrasting concepts and beliefs, you are in reality arranging the many pieces in the puzzle into a pattern which gives you, as individuals, meaning and a direction to your search for a greater closeness with God.

There are many avenues to approaching God. One avenue is not necessarily better than another. It is more a matter of appropriateness to your needs and perceptions. Because an individual cannot understand a particular foreign language, it does not follow that the alien tongue is meaningless or in error. When you as individuals or as a nation are critical of the expression of religious beliefs of another, you are putting aside that expression and casting it off as meaningless. Each of you realizes the simplicity of this example, but each of you has experienced moments when you have felt critical and intolerant of the nature of the expression of another's search.

Learn to be tolerant. Learn to recognize the validity of the search which extends outward on a path different from your own. Seek the sense of sincerity in the search of another and accept that. Do not expect all to travel the same path that you choose. Recognize the earnestness of the reach of others toward God by whatever name they choose to call God. By doing so, you will become more aware of the kindred force which unites so many different people. You will have a greater sense of God's presence, perceived at times maybe as a magnet which draws those who look for God in the appropriate direction. Your recognition of the commonness of forces that are apparently so divergent will slowly but with certainty guide the world's peoples toward a greater desire for peace.

God blesses each of you. God has responded to each of your prayers, those which were voiced and those offered through the heart. Your prayers have been answered. Go out and confirm God's blessings in the world and rejoice in your knowledge of God's love and care!

Amen.