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- *Spiritual passage to afterlife*
- *Different locations in the afterlife*
- *Receiving and giving love*

God's light is with each of you this evening, and shines especially brightly upon the father of one of you. It is a time of transition, and although it has seemed lengthy, it has been in fact brief. Her father has learned a great deal during this period of relative inactivity, and the time is nearly at hand when he will join us. Because of the transitional period he has been experiencing, his change from human life to spiritual life will indeed be smooth, and he will find refreshment and peace and love and a release from concerns and pain. His life has been a good life of giving, and his family has every reason to rejoice in being blessed by his presence.

You all are aware of those who have passed on to our side. For some, the change has been welcomed; for others, it has been fought. There is no reason to fight or resist, for the process of spiritual passage is essential to all who experience human life. We emphasize here spiritual **passage**, for the soul remains the same. It is, as you know, merely a change in state. Awareness is not terminated; it is heightened. We are much more aware of what life offers. We are much more aware of God's light. We are much more aware of the potential and strength of love than we ever were as humans. Such passage which you all must experience is a joyful one—one never to be feared.

It is difficult for those who are left behind, for they are unable to experience in a tangible way the presence of the one who has moved to a new sphere. But you must always recognize that the next sphere is not necessarily in a different place. It is a change of state, not location. Those who have gone before you are as close to you as they were in human form, for in spiritual form there is no such thing as space. There is no distance between you and your guides. There is no distance between you and loved ones who have passed over. You're immediately united with others simply through the power of thought and prayer. Just as you can instantaneously imagine yourself in another location, regardless of its distance, just as quickly is the soul of another close to you.

We are really not apart from you in any way, nor is God somehow removed to some distance only to come nearby when asked. God is completely a part of your lives. All of your ancestors are parts of your lives. There is no distance really which separates them. There are spheres of spiritual development—additional planes of development if you wish to call them that—which have different locations. But those locations are not physically apart from one another, for to traverse from these locations to where you are is immediate. Such instantaneous proximity does not take place over distances. This is difficult for us to make clear to you how souls may be developing in a location which is

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not the same location you find yourselves in and yet virtually at no distance away. This is one of the riddles of life.

As a soul develops it relinquishes many of the ties it has to human life. The soul becomes more involved in perfection. That involvement carries attention away from human life and more toward the direct calling of God. And yet if you pray for such a soul—for its development, its growth—it is immediately with you. There is no distance.

In time you will all understand that the dimensions of our lives are void of time and space. It is merely existence. Your hand may be some distance from your elbow, but the hand is not separated from the elbow. The foot may be some distance from the head, but it is not separated from the head. Perhaps this analogy can help to understand the issue of spiritual development at other locations and yet always being nearby.

You each seek opportunities for growth and you seek an understanding of growth. We would like to address the issue of understanding that growth as much has been given to you recently on the subject of opportunities for growth.

The growth of the soul takes many forms. It appears through numerous manifestations. It is given evidence through patience, caring, compassion, sacrifice for another, the upholding of ideals, being present to listen, offering selfless advice when asked, offering prayer on behalf of another. These are but a few of the manifestations of spiritual growth. But such evidence as may be observed is merely the result of one activity of the soul, and that is the growth of love.

Opportunities are important, but what do they lead to? They lead to your capacity to give and receive love. Both are necessary. You are aware of what it means to give love to another, but you are often indifferent to the implications of receiving love. When someone offers a hand in friendship and support, you must recognize that you are the recipient of love, even if it is not offered in the name of love. The fact that another makes an effort to do something which helps you is in itself an offering of love.

So often you choose to reject what others may offer because you may feel such offerings to be self-serving, to be given because of what the appearance shall be rather than for what benefit may occur. You must be willing to recognize the sacrifices that others make for your benefit. They may be friends, associates, students, teachers, professionals in the community, and so on. We are saddened when we see that many of you are unaware of what is given to you in the form of love, and we try to redouble our efforts to sensitize you to the works of others for your benefit.

So, too, is it important to offer love. The offer of love we have spoken of often. It is more difficult to offer love if you have not received, for it is more difficult to give what one does not have. If you are to be more effective in enriching the lives of others, you must be more sensitive to how others enrich your own lives. This does not mean that your enrichment is more important than the enrichment of others. It only implies that you must experience love in order to give it.

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The most important function of any family is to alternately give and receive love in a relatively small circle. Those who are effective in supporting others have learned what it means to be supported. Those who actively enrich another's life have been enriched by others already. There is no life which proceeds without being enriched from outside. All lives receive that benefit, but few are sensitized to it and therefore are less able to provide such enrichment to others.

The spiritual growth of which we so often speak, therefore, requires a heightened sensitivity to the love offered by others which in turn provides you with an ability to pass on that love. Without the unit of a family there is less opportunity for receiving love. You can think of countless examples of people who have given significantly to others after having been the recipients of considerable love through family or through close friends.

To give you must first receive, but in giving you also do receive, for in giving love to another you are replenished by God's presence, and in the end you are stronger for what you gave than you would have been if you had kept all.

There are so many stories in all religions relating the importance of giving and, as a result, receiving. Your lives therefore maintain an alternating balance between such receiving and giving. First you receive, then you give. Having given you are empowered to give more. Such giving is spreading the power of God among those who share in life. It is this giving which provides meaning for life, and it is this giving which provides for the growth of your souls.

Life's function is spiritual development. You may translate that into life's function is giving to others. They are both the same. You will have many opportunities of giving to another. We don't necessarily mean monetarily. It can be in many different forms. In as much as you provide meaning and substance to the life of another, you have given to another. Those opportunities you will have.

Make an effort to recognize the giving of others which benefits you. Grab hold of the examples that others have set and use them as guiding beams for your interaction with others. Just as the sacrifices of others have provided meaning to your life, your sacrifices will give meaning to another.

The relationship between you and your guides is one of receiving and giving. You receive insight from your guides and as a result are able to give to others. Without such insight your ability to give is lessened. You are sensitive to our desires to help you, to our acts of love for you. Were it not so, you would not be together at this time. You need not worry that you will be insensitive to love offered by others, but you must constantly strive for a heightened awareness of that interrelationship that you all share.

Life is a growing experience. It is a combination of receiving and giving, and a wonderful cycle it is! You are fortunate to be living human lives. We ask you to make the most of your lives, give meaning to them, have a sense of purpose and design and focus, be aware of all that happens around you, and dedicate yourselves to the enrichment of others.

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And now we bless you with God's light and in God's love.

Amen.