

April 1, 2014

- *Societies evolve at a different pace than individuals*
- *God is in everything*
- *Dealing with adversity*

The Lord, the God, the Spirit Center, of Love is a part of each of your lives.

You do have much to be grateful for, and you have much that can create great concerns. As was noted, those gathered have shared many experiences that have challenged and upset as well as inspired and comforted, for your group is no different in truth than any other collection of human beings. Each group expresses as they can in ways that have meaning for all who are present, but all human beings do experience the kinds of events that you share and the kinds of events that you experience when not openly shared.

There is indeed much that is learned through human life, and there is much that continues to be learned. That growth which takes place among human beings is a growth that is in some ways independent of the growth of societies. You are growing in your understanding of what peace can mean, whether you are talking about international peace, interpersonal peace, or inner peace. But you grow in that understanding and yet are surrounded by others whose paths are different. The differences in those paths can and often do create strife.

As we look at the development of cultures throughout human history, there has been strife, there has been disagreement, there has been injury inflicted by humans on other humans, for human life is not perfect, and any society will be encumbered by the intersections and conflicts of the paths of individuals.

Yes, a society can take on a kind of character if there are traditions that are opposed to conflict and an expression of disagreement. But even within those societies, disagreements and tensions do exist, and they have since the beginning of human life. There is a kind of collective direction, however, that does speak to an increased sensitivity to the value of others.

The pluralistic view is not unchanging, but societies evolve at a different pace than individuals. Every society and every group of people experience those different paths in their own ways, but those differences are still there. It is not the natural direction of humankind ultimately to be nothing but an expression of unconditional love, but there is that direction that is part of the evolution of each soul, each spirit. Society lags behind the individual in the realization of those goals that reflect the love that is God, because each group of people within has a different way of evolving spiritually. You cannot expect all human life to become the same in the ways that they progress toward a spiritual awareness and a full understanding of what God is, by whatever name is used.

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The needs for you as a human being circulate around your own development and the enhancement of those with whom you interact either directly or through prayer. No single individual will permanently change an entire culture, but all individuals have the potential to influence that change in their own unique ways.

All people have an obligation, a responsibility, to become loving in ways that are appropriate for them. Your development as individuals depends solely on the openness that you experience and the openness that you create. We have spoken often of the need to be vulnerable, to be receptive, not always to give. This was underscored very strongly in your gathering here, but it is true for all human beings. It is easy to be consumed by your own engagements with less sensitivity to what others can provide. You know you become loving as a consequence of being loved, but being loved by others is not enough. You must be open to knowing you are loved by others.

When you pray for another, you pray for that individual to be open. You don't just pray that God acts or intervenes or interrupts or directs. Your prayers are not for the purpose of engaging God but rather for you to be open to the engagement that already is.

Your connection to your own culture should be a connection of openness, a connection that accepts. You know so well the value of unconditional love, but the other side of that issue is the importance of unconditional acceptance, acceptance of love that is directed toward you. It is a two-way street. You do receive, you do give, but it is important that that two-directional existence be enhanced and strengthened. If you strengthen your openness to the peace and love that you seek, and if you pray for the strength to receive the balance that is so necessary, you will then be in a position of openness to all who are around you, and it is that openness that is what all human beings must ultimately learn.

Many create barriers that are defensive in nature but fearful in cause. No one is given life to build walls. All are given lives to open those shutters.

You wish to be open to God's presence in life, but you experience the presence that you seek through others. You are part of what God is and who God is toward others. God's presence is not such that it is seen only as a ray of light coming from the heavens. It may be thought to be such as a way of understanding what it means to be guided, to be directed, but in reality, God's presence is the presence of all that is, all that exists, all that has been created.

You ask to hear God; listen to your neighbor. You ask for ways to see God; open your heart to all that surrounds you. You do not see with your eyes. You see with your heart, and you see through love. If you wish to be godly, do not wish for a flash of inspiration that tells you how to be godly. Rather, be fully open to the God that is within you, open to the light that is within you, and allow that light to go beyond who you are, what you are, where you are, and when you are.

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You look for God. God is inside. God is inside you. God is inside everything. When you open your heart and accept that God is in everything, you cannot possibly miss seeing God. God is love, of course, but God is also everything, and you are a part of that everything, and therefore you have within you an expression of God.

Whatever you pray for is already within you. You pray for balance—it is within. You pray for healing, peace, understanding, patience, tolerance, love—all that is within you. There is nothing that you can pray for that doesn't already exist inside you. You pray for light—the light is inside. You only need to see it with your heart. You pray for peace, for understanding—anything that you ask of God is within and around you. You are not asking God to act; you are asking yourself to see. That seeing with the heart is seeing with love. Love who you are, what you are, where you are, when you are, and then offer that same love to everyone.

Yes, there are challenges. Yes, there are those who seem to step into your path to make progress more difficult, but they are also of equal value. They have an equal place in the light. They have the light within them that is within you. If their shutters remain closed, then that is where they are at the moment in their development. They are no less because of vision being closed. You cannot expect to have clear vision at all times, but it is important to remember when you have seen God, so that when you do not see that Presence, you still know that God is there, that God is within, and that you are a part of what God is.

Life is precious and affords you the opportunity to find meaning, meaning in everything. There is meaning in what brings joy and peace. There is meaning to be drawn from what creates conflict, pain or sadness. There is meaning to all that you experience, because what you experience belongs to the creation of God. It is not God's purpose to create suffering or sadness, but suffering or sadness is encountered within creation, and therefore if not caused by God, it belongs to God.

Accept all that you encounter as belonging to God, and don't waste your thoughts on whether something that creates pain or sadness is caused or willed by God, for that is not what God is. You are what God is. Those whom you see and know and know of and have no idea about are all God.

Live with an openness to what is beyond you and most especially what is within you, because in acknowledging what is within, you are acknowledging equally what is in every human that you encounter, what is in every object that exists. Your vision continues to open, to broaden, to deepen. You can rejoice that you are given the vision of the strength that you already have. Embrace who you are, and embrace all others for who they really are.

Our prayers are for your vision from the heart. Our prayers, our energies are devoted to helping you broaden that vision and broaden your ability to be open to all that surrounds your lives.

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Amen.