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- *Fear always involves loss*
- *Purpose of life is enhancement of spirit*
- *Spirit is the rudder of life*

God's peace is yours. God's love is yours. God's strength is yours. These are not idle remarks to begin our communication with you at this time. They are statements of fact, but those facts also acknowledge differences. Yes, God's love is yours. It is your love, but each individual has a different capacity, different in their ability to receive love that is offered and in the ability to give love as it is needed. This difference is a dynamic difference. It is never constant.

There are times in your life when you feel more engaged in being loving, but there are also times when you feel in some way that you wish to get even, that you wish to change what is, that you wish to overcome something. Such desires are entirely human. The idea of getting even means the wish to somehow be in balance with another individual or set of ideas or principles. It is natural if you feel faulted or incorrectly blamed for something to wish to do all that can be done to right the record, to reestablish the balance. That is human, but being fully loving means that you are not anxious to get back at, to even the score. It means that you accept the fallibility of your own life and the lives of all others. You accept that there will always be disagreements, different viewpoints that are expressed in so many different ways. When you feel set upon, threatened, unjustly criticized, or misunderstood, when you feel your views are not universally shared, it is time to step back. It is time to stop, to hold onto the moment and understand really what is being said, what is being asked for, what is being expressed.

You spoke briefly about fear, but what is fear beyond a belief that something will be lost and gone, possibly forgotten, that you may hold most dear? Fear always involves loss. Just as much as we say anger grows from fear, fear grows from loss. When you lose influence, when you lose your voice on a particular matter, when you lose the voices of others who share your concerns, there can be a response most clearly identified as fear, and as a result of that fear, anger can arise.

You cannot go through life without fear or anger. You cannot go through life without even a temporary commitment to a certain set of beliefs. When those beliefs are challenged, then there is the threat of loss, and when there is a threat of loss, the fear increases and actions may result as a consequence of that fear. Anger frequently accompanies such actions.

You are all more than aware of various acts of violence in the country and beyond your borders since you last gathered as a group. It is from such events that you may feel a growth of fear within, but much of what you observe going around your lives that is anxiety producing is in part an expression of fear, and therefore an expression of

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loss. If there is any lesson that is more difficult to accommodate than loss, it is clearly difficult to identify. It is clearly difficult to cope with.

What is worse than loss? It is an acknowledgment of a sense of meaninglessness. Life has meaning. Life has purpose. If human beings deny the meaning and purpose of life, life has no value. That is a greater burden than the burden of loss.

Some of what you have observed in recent weeks is an expression of fear, but much is caused by a sense of meaninglessness, of hopelessness, a lack of a rudder, a lack even of a sense of the necessity for a rudder. You don't live merely to live. You live for purposes. Those purposes have expectations. Along with those expectations is the experience of losing some of what is expected. Then comes the fear of what that may mean, but you are wondering what something means.

There are so many for whom their lives seem to have no meaning and therefore no consequence. There are those who suffer from mental illness that blocks a sense of meaning, of significance, of consequence, cause and effect, responsibility and all that that implies. Responsibility is not merely duty. It is an ability, *an ability*, to respond.

Life is filled with challenges beyond your wishes, challenges which seem insurmountable, but life when it is lived with honesty, with truthfulness, with reflection toward what is, is a life that has a sense of purpose, a sense of direction. If you lose the direction you feel is yours, there is frustration, anxiety, fear, and there is anger.

Part of our purpose in your lives is to do what we can that will lead to your belief that all life has meaning, that all life has purpose. Purpose does not mean duty. The purpose is related more to value.

All life has purpose. All life has a reason for that life. No two lives are equal in all ways. No two lives are identical, but in a specific way we can say life does have meaning. Life does have purpose. There is a reason for life. The reason for life is not life itself. The reason for life is the enhancement of spirit. It is the way the spirit can grow and become more godly until finally being part of the entity, the community that is God.

Your life is important because there is purpose. There is a rudder. You may not know necessarily where that rudder will take your raft, but there is a rudder, and it is for you to grab hold of it and to acknowledge its importance to your life. The rudder, the spirit, the connection with God is absolutely essential for you to traverse your path as it is to be so.

Your human journeys are never random. Your journeys have momentum. Your journeys have a rhythm and pace and energy to them. You could say in musical terms that your paths do make music, for music is a blending of many sounds and the presence of no sound. Your lives are the blending of many influences and the presence of uncertainty, of questioning, even doubting. But each of your lives comes with a rudder, and it's our loving activity to help you know that the rudder has value. The rudder is important. The rudder avoids randomness, pointlessness, and

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directionlessness. The rudder provides a perspective. The rudder leads toward some goal. The goals may change as your needs will change, but the rudder is a way of moving forward, of giving meaning and value.

When you are aware of the rudder and its part of your life, you are then more able to accept uncertainty. You are more able to accept loss, for you may lose a sense of personal dignity and yet maintain a sense of personal value because of the value of spirit, the value of your soul. The rudder is therefore not a predictor of the future but a guarantor that there *is* a future.

Your spirit is a form of energy not unlike who we are. That spirit does not find nourishment in the facts surrounding a loss, nor does it find sustenance in the propagation of fear or the spreading of anger. The difficulties that society faces are in large measure because of a failure to recognize the sacred, failure to recognize there is purpose and value to all, failure to recognize that there is a rudder for all people, failure to acknowledge an equality of all human beings. Can your life continue without loss? No. A blessed life is not a life void of loss but rather a life that acknowledges the rudder of spirit, that despite the storms that create losses you can still find a direction that is appropriate.

Fear and loss—these companions accompany one another throughout the existence of human life. On our side, there is no sense of loss. There is no fear, for we recognize that with spirit as the rudder, there is never a real loss. There is a change of direction. There is a realigning of human energies, but there is no loss.

The anxieties that you experience and express concerning international, national, local, and personal issues are anxieties that momentarily lose vision of the spirit. You are always in that light. You are always in that Spirit. Your spirit and the spirits of all comprise a part of what is the Spirit Center, the Creator, God. Everyone is a part of that, and being part of God and sharing in your own ways what it is to be godly, you're never lost. Therefore, there is no loss and no great need for fear. As a result, the experience of anger loses its grip.

You are blessed as you find yourselves moving away from anger, fear, and loss, and you see yourselves as part of a continuum that is an expression of God in the world. Is it natural to be fearful? Of course, but as you recognize, there are no significant losses. The fears that surround you are lessened. They lose the tight grip upon the lives that you lead. All is never lost. No matter what happens, all is never lost. Regardless of the crises that seem to accumulate in life as you observe and experience it, all is never lost. When conflicts arrive between nations or groups of people, and those conflicts seem irreconcilable, all is never lost. When you feel challenged and are unable for a moment to see any evidence of God, all is not lost. Your lives are never lost. They are transformed, they're refined, they're polished, they're made ever more beautiful, but nothing is lost. No relationship is lost. No group of people is lost. No ideas that uplift and support are lost.

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The absence of loss can mean the ultimate absence of fear, and it is that reality that can bring about a wondrous and abiding sense of peace. Your life is as it is. Your relationships are as they are, but your life evolves. Your relationships evolve. Your understandings expand from their evolution and becomes deeper and wider and more encompassing.

You are all a part of the same family—a family of creation, a family that has as its roots the common, loving presence of God. With God ever present, nothing is lost.

We bless you as you traverse your paths, as you encounter others, and we are with you as you struggle to affirm in your own lives the presence of God, the presence of Spirit Center, and the presence of all that has been created. You are blessed. We are blessed. Rejoice!

Amen.