Pathwork Lecture 38: Images

This lecture is given in an expanded poetic format, what I call a Devotional Format of the lecture, and in that sense this is my interpretation of the intent of the lecture. I may have interpreted portions differently from you, and I ask you to ponder the words for your own interpretation. I did this Devotional Format so I can take the words into my heart, phrase by phrase, much as I would in reading poetry – that is, devotionally.

The blessings to me in developing this format have been truly profound, and my wish is that this Devotional Format will be a blessing to others. I invite you to slowly read and ponder this format of the text – with an open heart to experience the Guide’s Presence and Love emerging from among the words such that the wisdom comes to LIVE you.

For clarity: The original text is in bold and italicized. [My adds of commentary/clarification/interpretation are in brackets, italicized, and not bolded.] To learn more of my Devotional Format and see the lectures I have done in this way, go to https://www.garyvollbracht.com/pathwork-lectures/pathwork-lectures-devotional-format/

Gary Vollbracht

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>03</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the name of the Lord.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blessed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is this hour [i.e., Blessed is this time we now spend together in this lecture].</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blessings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for all of you, my dear friends.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of you have made</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>serious efforts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on your path of development,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the spirit world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has decided that you are ready for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stronger medicine.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So I shall take this work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a step further.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

by Eva Broch Pierrakos
Edited by Judith and John Saly; Devotional Format posted 8/20/18
There comes a point when your struggle on the path becomes a bit discouraging.

You have begun to recognize your faults;

you are full of good intentions to overcome them [i.e., to overcome your faults];

and you may even have succeeded [i.e., succeeded in overcoming some of your faults] in a small measure.

You recognize some of your wrong attitudes, and you wish to change them with all the willpower at your disposal.

Yet you must face the fact that the outer willpower is insufficient to do so [i.e., the outer willpower is insufficient to change the wrong attitudes you now recognize and strongly want to change].

No matter how hard you try, you seem unable to make changes, and you ask yourself why.
Ignorant of
the causes
behind this inability [i.e., behind this inability to change
the wrong attitudes you now recognize and strongly want to change],
you are often inclined
to give up altogether,
and
you tell yourself
that it is useless to try [i.e., useless to try to change the wrong
attitudes you now recognize].

And that [i.e., And giving up trying to change the wrong attitudes you now recognize]
is where your gravest mistake lies.

My dear friends,
it is important to realize
that over the course of a lifetime,
usually even in
• earliest childhood or
• infancy,
every personality
forms certain impressions
due to
• environmental influences
or to
• sudden,
• unexpected experiences.
These impressions or attitudes usually take the form of conclusions in the mind of the person.

Most of the time these conclusions are wrong.

You see and experience something unfortunate, one of the unavoidable hardships of life, and you then make generalizations from them [i.e., you generalize one of the unavoidable hardships of life].

These generalizations later establish themselves as preconceived ideas.

The conclusions are not thought out; rather they [i.e., rather, the generalized conclusions from one of the unavoidable hardships of life] are emotional reactions, general attitudes toward life.
**They** [i.e., The generalized conclusions from one of the unavoidable hardships of life] are not completely devoid of a certain logic, albeit:
- limited and
- erroneous
  [i.e., albeit limited and erroneous logic].

**As the years go by,**
these
- conclusions and
- attitudes
  [i.e., these generalized conclusions and attitudes from one of the unavoidable hardships of life]
sink more and more into the unconscious.

**From there** [i.e., From the unconscious],
they [i.e., these generalized conclusions and attitudes from one of the unavoidable hardships of life]
mold the life of every person to some extent.

**We call each such conclusion** [i.e., We call each such generalized conclusion and attitude from one of the unavoidable hardships of life] an "image," since we spirits see the whole thought process as a spiritual form – or image.
You might contend that people can also have

• positive,
• healthy images

engraved on their soul.

That [i.e., That people can also have positive, healthy images engraved on their soul]
is seldom true

because

in the absence of

a wrong image,

all

• thoughts and
• feelings

are

• fluctuating,
• dynamic and
• relaxed:

They [i.e., In the absence of a wrong image all thoughts and feelings]

are

• flexible.

The whole universe is suffused with a number of divine forces.

• Thoughts,
• feelings, and
• attitudes

that are unconnected with an image

flow harmoniously with the divine currents,

adapting themselves spontaneously to your immediate needs.
But

the forms of
the thought/feelings
emanating from
wrong images
are
• static and
• congested.

They [i.e., The forms of the thought/feelings emanating from wrong images] do not "give"
in accordance with
changing circumstances.

Thus,
they [i.e., Thus the forms of the thought/feelings emanating from wrong images] create
disorder.

The pure currents
flowing
through
a human soul
become
• disturbed and
• distorted.

A short circuit is established.

This is the way
• we in the spirit world
see images.

The way
• you [i.e., The way you humans in the earth sphere]
see and feel them [i.e., The way you humans see and feel images] is through
• unhappiness,
• anxiety, and
• puzzlement
over many
apparently
inexplicable things in your life.
For instance,
- your inability
to change
what you wish to change
or
- certain kinds of events that seem to reoccur regularly
without an obvious reason

are just two examples [i.e., two examples of how you humans experience images].

There are many more [i.e., There are many more examples of how you humans experience images].

The wrong conclusions that form an image are drawn from
- ignorance and
- half-knowledge

and thus [i.e., thus since they are drawn from ignorance and half-knowledge of the still immature developing consciousness]
they [i.e., the wrong conclusions]
cannot remain
in the conscious mind.

As the personality grows up,
your
- intellectual knowledge [i.e., your intellectual knowledge develops, becomes increasingly conscious, and more and more]
contradicts
your
- emotional "knowledge."

You therefore [i.e., Because as you mature your consciousness becomes more and more filled with intellectual knowledge that contradicts your immature emotional “knowledge,” you]
push down the emotional knowledge
until it [i.e., until your undeveloped and immature emotional knowledge]
disappears from consciousness.
The more emotional knowledge is hidden [i.e., is hidden in the unconscious], the more potent the image becomes.

How can you be sure that such images exist in you?

In the first place, your inability to overcome certain faults, no matter how much you want to, indicates that an image exists.

I have sometimes mentioned that people love some of their faults.

• How and why would they love them [i.e., How and why would they love some of their faults]?

For the simple reason that according to the image, certain faults seem necessary as
  • a defense,
  • a protective measure.
**This** [i.e., *That certain faults are necessary as a defense, a protective measure*], of course, is
- unconscious reasoning.

**The**
- conscious effort
to overcome the fault remains fruitless because
  - the roots of the image are unconscious and
  - the whole inner reasoning process is hidden from the intellect.

*And it will remain so* [i.e., *And the whole inner reasoning process will remain hidden from the intellect*]
until
- the image is recognized.

**Another indication of an image** is
  - the repetition of certain incidents in one's life.
An image always forms some sort of pattern, whether it is
• a behavior pattern in response to certain occasions,
or [i.e., or it is a pattern in]
• events that seem to happen to you without your doing anything to invite them [i.e., without your doing anything to invite the events].

In fact, consciously you may fervently wish for the very opposite of your image.

But the
• conscious desire is the weaker of two impulses,
since
• the unconscious is always stronger [i.e., since the unconscious desire of your emotional “reasoning” in the image is always stronger than the conscious desire you may fervently wish for in your intellect].

The unconscious does not realize that its attitude prohibits the very wish you
• consciously express but
• cannot fulfill.
The price
   for your
   unconscious pseudo-protection
   is the frustration
   of the legitimate desire.

This [i.e., That your unconscious attitude that serves as pseudo-protection
   actually frustrates and blocks fulfillment of your legitimate desire]
   is very important to understand,
   my friends;

it is equally important to understand
   that
   • people and
   • events
     can be drawn to a person
     as if to a magnet
     on account of
     such inner images.

This may be difficult for you to see,
   but it is so.

The only remedy
   is to find out
   • what your image is,
   • on what basis it was formed, and
   • what your wrong conclusions were.
Often you do not notice
the repetitive pattern in your life, my friends.

You pass over
the
obvious.

You still keep assuming
that
• certain occurrences
  are due to coincidence
or that
• some arbitrary fate
  is testing you,
  or that
• other people are responsible for
  your repeated mishaps.

You therefore
pay much more attention to
• the slight variations of each incident
  than to
• the common denominator underlying them.

Most psychologists
have verified this process.

But what they have often
failed to realize
is that images
seldom form
in this life,
no matter how early they began.
Most of the time
   an image
   is carried over
   from one lifetime
   to another.

That is why
   certain incidents
   do not form an image
   in people
   who are free of
   a particular conflict.

Yet
   they [i.e., Yet these very same incidents or conditions]
   will form one [i.e., will form an image]
   in a person's soul
   who has brought
   that conflict into this life.

Although it is essential to find
   • the image and
   • its origin
   in the present life
   to adequately dissolve it,
there are still cases
   where the knowledge of all the pertinent facts
   would be very useful to the therapist.

In other words,
   an image can often be successfully treated
   without
   the knowledge of its origin
   in a previous life.

But there are cases
   where
   the knowledge of the carry-over principle
   would be invaluable.
**In an earlier lecture** [see Lecture 34 – Preparation for Reincarnation, originally given July 25, 1958]

I explained

- **how an entity**
  is prepared for life on earth;

- **how plans**
  for what should be
  - accomplished and
  - overcome
  *in the next incarnation* are made according to previous existences;

- **how the subtle bodies**
  surrounding
  the physical vehicle of the incarnate being
  are prepared
  so that
  the conflicts
  should bring
  the inner problems
  of the particular person to the surface.

**This** [i.e., The plans for what should be accomplished and overcome in the next lifetime and corresponding conflicts that should manifest to bring inner problems to the surface so that they can be seen and overcome]

is the basis on which
- **families and**
- **other life circumstances** are chosen.
When an image carries over from previous lives, the incarnation takes place in an environment where provocations to that image are bound to occur, perhaps in response to similar images in

• the parents or
• others around the growing child.

That [i.e., Being born in an environment where provocations to that image are bound to occur, perhaps in response to similar images in the parents or in others around the growing child]

is how
the image brings out a problem;

and
only if
something becomes a problem will the person
• pay attention to it [i.e., will the person pay attention to the image] instead of
• looking away [i.e., instead of looking away from the image].

If the image is ignored, circumstances will be much more difficult in the following life on earth until the conflicts become so overwhelming that outside factors can no longer be blamed for the pain inflicted by
• the wrong conclusions and
• misconceptions of the image.
This [i.e., The pain due to wrong conclusions and misconception of the image becoming so overwhelming that outside factors can no longer be blamed for the overwhelming pain]

is when the person begins to turn
  • upward and
  • inward.

The only solution to your life's problems is to make your images conscious.

I can give you advice on how to begin, but you will not be able to accomplish it [i.e., you will not be able to make your images conscious] completely by yourself.

You will need help.

If you are serious in your desire to
  • find and
  • dissolve the images in your soul – for your life is not without problems –

then pray to God.

He will
  • give you further guidance and
  • lead you to the proper person with whom you can cooperate in your quest to find your images.
This work [i.e., This work of finding and dissolving images] requires, among other things, humility, which as we all know is a very important asset for your spiritual development.

Those who are constantly reluctant to work with another person lack humility, even if only in this one respect [i.e., lack humility, if only in respect to being reluctant to work with another person to help one find and dissolve one's images].

Perhaps you also fear to face your images.

But how shortsighted this is [i.e., But how shortsighted it is not to face your images], my friends!

It is this very image [i.e., It is this very image, that is, the image that finding, facing and dissolving images is dangerous and should be avoided] that causes you so much trouble, although unconsciously you do not think so [i.e., although unconsciously you do NOT think this image, the image that finding, facing and dissolving images should be avoided, is causing you so much trouble].

Unconsciously you are convinced that your images protect you [i.e., Unconsciously you are convinced that your images protect you and should be kept in placed, not dissolved].
Let me give you a very primitive example:

A child has taken a bath;
the water was boiling hot
and therefore
has injured the child.

This child
may come to the conclusion
that
taking baths
is dangerous.

The child
will never take another bath
if it can avoid it.

Out of this misconception [i.e., Out of this misconception
that taking baths is dangerous]
conflicts
will arise.

In youth
the parents
force the child
to take a bath,
and every time this happens
the child
will go through
• untold and
• quite unnecessary
misery.
In later life

other conflicts [i.e., conflicts other than the misery the child experienced when forced by the parents to take a bath] will come up.

Either

the person will actually follow the inner conclusion [i.e., follow the wrong conclusion that taking a bath is dangerous],

which is no longer conscious,

or

perhaps [i.e., or perhaps the person] may find more rational explanations [i.e., find more rational explanations for why taking a bath is dangerous and should be avoided].

But the uncleanliness [i.e., But the uncleanliness that results from not taking a bath] will create new conflicts:

rejection from others will set in motion a new chain reaction.

Or the person represses knowledge about the childhood incident [i.e., represses knowledge about the incident of being hurt by boiling bath water]

but realizes intellectually that resistance to bathing is unreasonable.

He will force himself to bathe in spite of his strong emotional revulsion [i.e., in spite of his strong emotional revulsion to bathing].
Thus [i.e., Thus, by forcing himself to bathe in spite of his strong emotional revulsion to bathing],

he will develop certain symptoms in connection with bathing that he cannot explain.

• The mystery of such "unreasonable" reactions
and
• the anxiety connected with them [i.e., and the anxiety connected with such “unreasonable” reactions and symptoms in connection with bathing]

will present difficulties that cannot be overcome unless the image is found.

Now, this is a very primitive example.

Most of the time the emotional reactions [i.e., emotional reactions to childhood events] are much more

• subtle and
• complicated.

I cannot stress enough that you are no longer aware of the original reasoning behind your conclusions [i.e., from the previous example, you are no longer aware of the original reasoning behind your conclusion that bathing is dangerous].

If you were confronted with the contents of your soul [i.e., from this example, confronted with your soul’s conclusion that bathing is dangerous],

• you would laugh.

• You would say that they [i.e., the contents of your soul – here “bathing is dangerous”] are

  • entirely untrue,
  • a wild fantasy.
It is also important to understand that the chain reaction of consequences resulting from the original impression [i.e., from the example, that the chain reaction of consequences resulting from the original impression that “bathing is dangerous”] creates • mishaps and • hardships.

These [i.e., These mishaps and hardships arising from the chain reaction of consequences resulting from the original impression – from the example, the original impression that “bathing is dangerous”] will be even harder for you to understand because your unconscious is so convinced that avoiding certain • actions and • reactions [i.e., from the example, avoiding certain actions and reactions connected with bathing] will protect you against the hurts of life.

Now how can you find your personal images?

Not by trying to change the symptoms, whatever they may be, but rather by working with them [i.e., by working with the symptoms arising from your images].
These symptoms [i.e., These symptoms arising from your images] include
- your inability to overcome certain faults and attitudes;
- your lack of control over certain patterns in your life; and
- fears and resistances on specific occasions.

The harder you try to eliminate the symptoms without having understood their roots, the more you will exhaust yourself in useless efforts.

The symptoms are merely one part of the price you pay for your ignorant inner conclusions [i.e., from the example, your ignorant inner conclusion that “bathing is dangerous”].
Start searching for the image by
  • thinking back on your life
  and
  • finding all the problems.

Write them down.

Include problems of all sorts.

You cannot do this unless you take the trouble to put them down concisely in black and white.

If you merely think about them, you will not have the overview necessary for comparison.

The written work is essential.

It [i.e., The written work] is certainly not too much to ask.

You do not have to do it in one day.

Take your time, even if it takes a few months.
Then,
when you have all the
• big
and
• small
troubles
in front of your eyes,
even the most
• nonsensical and
• insignificant
ones,

start to look for
the common denominator.

You will find
one common denominator [i.e., You will find one common denominator behind
all your big and small troubles and problems]
in most instances,
and sometimes
even more than one [i.e., even more than one common denominator].

I do
not
say that a difficulty
cannot occur
• only once in your life,
• independent of
any inner image.

That is possible.

This, too, [i.e., A difficulty occurring only once in your life,
independent of any inner image, too.]
is based on
cause and effect
as everything in the universe is,
but it
may not
be connected with
your image.
But be careful, my friends.

Do not put an occurrence aside
superficially,
assuming it is unconnected with
your personal image
merely because it appears that way [i.e., merely because it appears
that an occurrence is unconnected
with your personal image]
at first sight.

It is
• very possible,
and even
• probable,
that there are
no
unconnected happenings in your life.

All
unpleasant experiences
are probably connected with
your image
at least in some way.

The common denominator [i.e., The common denominator of your problems,
difficulties and unpleasant experiences]
may not be easy to find.

Only after
you have thoughtfully grasped
your image
will you be in a position to judge
which of your experiences, if any,
have something to do with it [i.e., have something to do with
your image].

Until then [i.e., Until you have thoughtfully grasped your image and are in a position
to judge which, if any, of your experiences have
something to do with your image]
you must refrain from
final judgments about
the events in your life.
In
  • meditation,

in
  • serious self-probing,

in
  • checking your emotional reactions
    about the
    • past and
    • present, and

through
  • prayer,

you will find,
after a
  • long and
  • arduous
    search,

the common denominator.

It [i.e., The common denominator of your problems, difficulties,
  and unpleasant experiences]

is pride.

Your self-will says:

"I do not want
  • the risk of life;
I do not want the
  • pain of life;
therefore,
  I draw this conclusion [i.e., I draw this conclusion
that I must avoid the pain or risk of life]
    which seems to safeguard me
    against it [i.e., seems to safeguard me from LIFE, with its
      pains and risks]."

In fact, it [i.e., In fact, the conclusion that I must avoid risk the pain of life]
  is not a safeguard,
for it [i.e., for trying to avoid the inherent pain and difficulties of life]
  will bring you
    the very trouble [i.e., the very troubles, difficulties, and pains of life]
    you are trying to escape from,
    since life cannot be cheated [i.e., you cannot escape the troubles,
      difficulties, and pains that are inevitable and inherent in life].
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This [i.e., This not being allowed to cheat life by trying to AVOID life’s inherent problems, difficulties and pains rather than growing from and through them] is the merciful law of God.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Otherwise [i.e., If you were allowed to cheat life by avoiding life’s inherent problems, difficulties and pains rather than growing through them] you could never emerge from the misery of the lower, darker planes of consciousness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Only when you begin to face your own wrong conclusions and fears and are ready to accept life for what it is will you be able to cure your soul.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is a necessary step in your development to give up some of the self-will that wishes to deny life in its present form [i.e., its present form, which includes pains, troubles, and difficulties].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Only then [i.e., Only then when you have given up some of your self-will that wishes to deny life in its present form, which includes pains, troubles, and difficulties] will you have acquired the humility not to wish for protection from the • risks and • hardships of life.

Your difficulties will cease to be necessary once you can fearlessly • accept and • shoulder them [i.e., once you can fearlessly accept and shoulder your difficulties].

It is a good beginning to review your life, concisely enumerating all your troubles [i.e., ALL your troubles, difficulties, problems, pains, and disharmonies].

And then go on to search for the common denominator.

Do not turn away from anything hastily, even if it [i.e., even if a particular happening or experience] appears to be unconnected to your problems.
Probe [i.e., Probe ALL of your happenings and experiences] and you may experience a surprise.

The most apparently unconnected happenings often turn out to have a single common denominator.

When you have found that [i.e., When you have found that common denominator], you have made a major step forward in your search, for then you possess a clue to the image.

But the common denominator by itself [i.e., BUT the COMMON DENOMINATOR to all your troubles, difficulties, problems, pains, disharmonies, happenings and experiences BY ITSELF] is not yet the key to the image.

It [i.e., The common denominator to all your troubles, difficulties, etc.] is a strong directive, but by no means does it open the door that will make you fully understand your whole life.

In order to get to
• the image itself,
to
• all the devious ways in which it was formed, and to
• understanding the processes of your reactions when you formed it,

you will have to explore your unconscious more thoroughly.
27

There are various ways to do this [i.e., There are many various ways to explore your unconscious].

It is impossible to do it [i.e., It is impossible to explore your unconscious] by yourself.

But if you

• begin the way I have suggested here [i.e., If you begin by finding the common denominator to all your troubles, difficulties, problems, pains, disharmonies, happenings and experiences]

and

• then pray for guidance,
  being ready to overcome your pride
  so you can
  be open with another person
  whom the spirit world
  will choose to help you,

then God will lead you to further victory.

28

Do not let yourself be dissuaded by your inner resistance [i.e., your inner resistance to do this work of finding the common denominator of all your troubles and problems and praying to find a person to help you explore your unconscious].

For that resistance [i.e., For your inner resistance to do this work] is just as

• erroneous and
• shortsighted

as

• the image itself.
In fact,
the very same quality
that makes you resist [i.e., the quality that makes you resist doing this work of finding the common denominator of all your troubles and problems and praying to find a person to help you explore your unconscious]

is the one
that
• created the image in the first place without your knowing it
and
• will continue to create untold misery for you, counteracting your conscious wishes.

Indeed,
your resistance [i.e., your resistance to this work of finding the common denominator of all your troubles and problems and praying to find a person to help you explore your unconscious]

causes you to lose what could be rightfully yours.

So have enough wisdom to
• see through your resistance and to
• evaluate it for what it is worth.

Do not let yourself be governed by it [i.e., Do not let yourself be governed by your resistance].
How can you be a spiritual person, who is
• developed and
• detached in the right sense, if you remain governed by your
  • unconscious
  • forces
and by the
• erroneous and
• ignorant
• conclusions
  that have formed such a painful image within you?

This image is the one factor in your life responsible for every unhappiness.

No one but you is responsible for your images.

True, you did not know any better when you formed them, but you do [i.e., but you do know better] now.

Therefore you are now equipped to eliminate the source of your unhappiness.
And please do not say,

"How can I be responsible for
other people
repeatedly
acting in certain ways
toward me?"

As I said before,
your image
draws these happenings to you,
as inevitably as
night must follow day.

It [i.e., Your image drawing these unpleasant happenings to you] is
like
• a magnet,
• a physical law,
like
• the law of gravity.

Your images
influence
the universal current
entering
your personal life sphere
so that
certain effects
must follow.
If you do not have the courage to delve into:
• your unconscious, face
• your image, dissolve
• it [i.e., dissolve your image], and thus make
• a new person out of yourself,
• you will never be free in this life.

You will always be chained and bound.

The price for freedom is the:
• courage and humility to face up to things.

When you have taken all the necessary steps, the victory of freedom brings such joy that nothing can mar your happiness.

Furthermore, you can be quite sure that the image you do not dissolve in this life will have to be dissolved in a future one.
This [i.e., That the image you do not dissolve in this life will have to be dissolved in a future one]
should not be taken as a threat, my friends.

It [i.e., That the image you do not dissolve in this life will have to be dissolved in a future one]
is just a logical consequence.

Besides,
how can anything be a threat that liberates you from your own chains?

You must not take it that way [i.e., You must not take as a threat the fact that the image you do not dissolve in this life will have to be dissolved in a future one].

You must merely see realistically that
the sooner you find your images of your own accord —
and not [i.e., and do not wait so that you find your images only when and] because your images keep acquiring new twists so that life is becoming too much for you —
the easier your life will become.

That you may safely believe.
You may say in certain moments,

"All this about being born again with the same problems may be speculation."

There may not be another life after all.

Why should I go through all the trouble now?"

But I say to you that you should undertake this work for the sake of this life, for it is

• never too late and
• always well worth the effort!

Your remaining years will mean a different kind of life:

you will be
• free instead of
• chained.

Even those who have no more doubts about the reality of reincarnation should consider this [i.e., should consider your reincarnation] as an additional incentive [i.e., as an additional incentive to find and dissolve your images in this lifetime].
Actually,
   it would be a very good exercise in meditation
to think about
what your next karma may be.

You are always
extremely concerned with
your
previous
incarnations.

It might be
even more beneficial
to be concerned with
your next one [i.e., be concerned with your NEXT incarnation].

With
some
• spiritual knowledge and
some
• intuition about yourself,
you shall be able to reap more benefits.

In addition,
by finding your image,
even to some degree,
you may form a pretty accurate idea
of
• what you have yet to fulfill
and
• what your next life may be.

Consider
what conditions you require
to resolve your conflicts
in order to fulfill
your life task.

Of course,
the actual next existence
will depend on your development
during the rest of this life, too.
Do not forget that
• the law of cause and effect or
• the law of karma
  specifies
  that people are always given the chance
to solve their problems
  in the easiest circumstances possible.

When not enough
• courage and
• willpower
  are mustered
  in easy circumstances,
the life that follows
  must necessarily be
  a little more difficult.

And if again the
• courage,
• humility, and
• willpower
  are not mustered,
the life afterward
  will be more difficult still.

Ultimately,
when the going gets really hard,
you will be forced to
• face your troubles
  instead of
• fleeing them.

So by law
your lives become increasingly difficult.

You violate divine law when you
• escape from yourself
  instead of
• facing yourself.
This [i.e., The fact that when you escape from yourself instead of facing yourself you violate divine law and thereby make your lives increasingly difficult] should also bring into clearer focus a controversial subject among people interested in the spiritual life.

People are
- uncertain and
- confused
  about how to react to
  - tests,
  - trials, and
  - hardships.

One school of thought claims
- God does not send tests.
- God is love;
  how could He want us to be unhappy?

This is true, my friends [i.e., God does NOT send tests, God is love, and God wants us to be happy].

The other school of thought says that
- it is necessary that we experience tests and therefore they are God’s will.

As tests come, we should
- accept them in humility and thus
  - prove our worthiness of God’s mercy and bliss.

This is equally correct, my friends [i.e., tests ARE necessary and thus are God’s will – we should accept tests in humility and thus prove our worthiness of God’s mercy and bliss].
But
    the full truth lies in
    • the middle,
    or rather in
    • an extension of these two concepts.

God has
    • made perfect laws
and
    • given His children free will.

If the laws
    could not be violated,
then free will
    would not exist.

The perfection of the law
    is that
    the long-term remedy
    is an effect of
    these very violations.

For
    the more you twist these laws,
    • consciously
or
    • unconsciously,

    the more they
    work against
    your interests,
until
    you finally reach a point
where you
    • cannot twist them further
and
    • must eventually
    change the direction of your will.
In God alone
lies
infinity,
and if you choose
any other direction [i.e., if you choose any direction other than strict obedience
of God’s perfect laws, made possible by union with the divine]
you must eventually
• turn around and
• seek union with
  the divine,
  because
  only strict adherence to
  the divine
  can be
  infinite.

Violation
  of anything divine
  must therefore
  perforce be
  finite.

You cannot
  infinitely twist
  the law.

Your violation of divine law
finally
  reaches a point
  where you
  automatically
  again
  begin to work for
  the good.
It is very true
that to take a test
in a spirit of humility
with the attitude of

"Father, Thy will be done"

is the right thing.

But this [i.e., But taking a test in a spirit of humility with the attitude of “Father, Thy will be done”]
is not enough
if you want to attain
a higher level.

The
• highest
and the
• best
you can do
is
not only to
• take the test
but also to
• search for your images.

Your
unconscious wrong conclusions
are directly responsible for
the tests you are experiencing at any given time.

And in order to
find your images,
you cannot
be impatient with yourself,
for it is
utterly impossible to
• find,
• comprehend, and
• dissolve
an image
in a short time.
It [i.e., Finding, comprehending, and dissolving an image] is a long drawn-out process.

And even after you have understood your images, the reeducation of your emotions, long-conditioned to follow a distortion, takes • time, • effort, and • patience.

So, as one school of thought says, • patience and • humility are absolutely necessary.

You may revolt against unhappiness, yet when you realize that • you, not • God and • the fates, are to blame [i.e., YOU, and NOT God and the fates are to blame for your unhappiness],

• your revolt may turn against yourself and • you thus will also become impatient with yourself.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With such currents [i.e., With such negative currents of impatience and turning against yourself for causing your own unhappiness], you will never succeed in finding and dissolving your image.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[In order to find and dissolve your image] You must be in a relaxed state of mind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Such a state of mind [i.e., Such a relaxed state of mind] can be yours if you understand and accept the length of the search.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once you accept your inability to become perfect quickly, you humbly accept temporary unhappiness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a vast difference between resigning yourself to unhappiness without understanding why, and the course I have shown you here: acceptance [i.e., acceptance of your temporary unhappiness].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To accept the tests [i.e., To accept the tests that involve your unhappiness]

• without understanding
  their underlying roots,

but nevertheless

• in a spirit of devotion,

  is already
  a great deal for some people.

This attitude [i.e., This attitude of acceptance without understanding, yet in a spirit of devotion to God]

also conditions you for the

• patience and
• humility

  that are so necessary
  to do the work
  whenever you are ready to do it.

It is certainly

healthier for the soul

not to revolt against

• God and
• creation.

However, the

• last,
• best, and
• highest

stage of this earth plane

is the approach I have outlined here, my friends [i.e., the approach of finding, accepting, and dissolving your image].

Purification
cannot come cheaply

and it would, indeed,

be cheap

if a mere

• list of faults
  and
• attempts

  to overcome them

were all that comprised it [i.e., were all that comprised purification].
Purification is more than that [i.e., Purification is more than merely listing your faults and then attempting to overcome them].

You cannot become purified unless you
• understand and
• control your own unconscious.

And that [i.e., And coming to understand and control your own unconscious] is a long journey.

You will receive help if you are willing to embark on this journey, however.

And you should understand that you are doing this work for
• God
and for
• yourself.

What God wants for you must be your own best interest, so you are not really making a sacrifice to God, since
• God and
• the true you are one!

Think about that [i.e., Think about the fact that God and the true you are one], my friends!
Some people
    are so selfish
    that they do not want to do
    anything for God
    that inconveniences them.

At the same time,
    they [i.e., At the same time, some people who are so selfish that they
do not want to do anything for God that inconveniences them]
    are blind enough
    to believe that what God wants for them
    is contrary to
    their own happiness.

Others
    are willing to sacrifice
    anything
    for God –
    although
    without understanding their images
    they will
    never
    truly succeed [i.e., will not feel truly happy and
    fulfilled by their willingness to sacrifice
    anything at all out of their devotion to God].

The more happiness
    results from their sacrifices,
the worse
    their guilt becomes
    until
    true
    inner
    happiness
    is conceived.
Such guilt [i.e., Such guilt for having more happiness as a result of their willingness to sacrifice anything at all out of their devotion to God]

is always
• a twist of the emotions
and is connected with
• the image.

Actually,
true happiness
cannot come
before
• the image
and
• the guilt
are
• understood and
• dissolved.

But in their present state of mind,
such people [i.e., people who feel guilt for having more happiness as a result of their willingness to sacrifice anything at all out of their devotion to God]
feel very heroic
if
their
• guilt
mingles with
their
• devotion.
QUESTION:
You mentioned
• willpower and
• courage
twice tonight.

Are the batteries of both
recharged
by prayer?

ANSWER:
Of course!

If you pray
specifically
for
• willpower and
• courage
for a good purpose,
as outlined in this lecture [i.e., for the good purpose of finding, accepting, and dissolving your images],
the prayer
will certainly be answered.

If you pray for
something else,
you will get
something else,
provided
it [i.e., provided that “something else”]
is
• good and
• according to law.
It is so very important
to know
what to pray for
at any given stage of your development.

People seldom realize
that they
must pray
to get ahead.

Often
it is not clear to you
what you need most
at specific phases of your development.

You may put emphasis on
something that is
less important
• now
than it was
• two months ago.

Your needs
may have changed.

As Jesus Christ said,

"Knock
and it will be opened unto you."

The knocking
symbolizes
being
• alert and
• interested
enough
to figure out
what you need most
at various stages of your path.
The path changes constantly.

And you surely cannot pray with equal concentration on everything at once.

**QUESTION:**
Are all our limitations a result of the image?

**ANSWER:**
Most of them [i.e., Most of your limitations] are, but not entirely.

You will always have limitations, as long as
• you are still in the cycle of incarnations and
• you have not reached the state of divinity.

You cannot be a universal genius.
Limitations
on a broader scale
have nothing to do with
your images.

But if you
• encounter limitations placed on
  your talents
  and
  • cannot make sufficient use of them,

then that [i.e., then encountering limitations placed on your talents and finding you cannot make full use of your talents]
certainly has something to do with
your images.

I will retire now
with blessings
of a special kind
that are coming to
each one of you, my dear ones.

It [i.e. This special kind of blessing that is coming to each one of you]
is the blessing of
courage
that you all so badly need.

And I beg of you
to use it [i.e., I beg you to use this special blessing of courage]
in the right way.

For if you
open your
• heart
  and
  • soul
to the strength
flowing to each one of you,
you will
  feel
  courage.
And if you keep that strength, you can make it [i.e., if you keep that strength, you can make that strength, the strength that is flowing to your open heart and soul, the strength that enables you to feel courage] last for a while.

But use it [i.e., But use that strength that is flowing to your open heart and soul and that enables you to feel courage] where it does the most real good for you.

Do not use it [i.e., Do not use that strength that is flowing to your open heart and soul] for nonessentials!

It is up to you how you use this force [i.e., how to use this force that enables you to feel courage].

You
• receive it [i.e., You receive this force that enables you to feel courage] and you
• have free will to open yourself to it [i.e., you have free will to open yourself to this force that enables you to feel courage].

You should know what to do with it.

It will be a test of how you use the strength [i.e., It will be a test of how you use the strength that enables you to feel courage] if you accept it now willingly.

The love of God touches all of you, my dear ones.

Be in peace; be in God.
For information to find and participate in Pathwork activities world wide, please write:

The Pathwork® Foundation
PO Box 6010
Charlottesville, VA 22906-6010, USA
Call: 1-800-PATHWORK, or
Visit: www.pathwork.org

The following notices are for your guidance in the use of the Pathwork® name and this lecture material.

Trademark/Service Mark
Pathwork® is a registered service mark owned by The Pathwork Foundation, and may not be used without the express written permission of the Foundation. The Foundation may, in its sole discretion, authorize use of the Pathwork® mark by other organizations or persons, such as affiliate organizations and chapters.

Copyright
The copyright of the Pathwork Guide material is the sole property of The Pathwork Foundation. This lecture may be reproduced, in compliance with the Foundation Trademark, Service Mark and Copyright Policy, but the text may not be altered or abbreviated in any way, nor may the copyright, trademark, service mark, or any other notices be removed. Recipients may be charged the cost of reproduction and distribution only.

Any person or organization using The Pathwork Foundation service mark or copyrighted material is deemed to have agreed to comply with the Foundation Trademark, Service Mark and Copyright Policy. To obtain information or a copy of this policy, please contact the Foundation.