Pathwork Lecture 221: Faith and Doubt in Truth or Distortion
1996 Edition, Original Given May 1, 1974

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>
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<th>Content</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Greetings, my dearest beloved friends here.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Divine blessings pour forth, permeating all that is • within and • around you.</td>
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<td>Your path is a blessed one.</td>
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<td>In tonight’s lecture I would like to speak about a particular phase on the path, for that phase must come sooner or later for everyone.</td>
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<td>Actually, many of my friends have already arrived at that juncture.</td>
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After having invested considerable
   • effort,
   • time and
   • energy,
as you go through
   the spiral movement
   of your inner being,
you finally find
   that which
   • obstructs you.

You find
   that which
   • prohibits you.

You find
   that which
   • is negative.

When you
   • go deep
     enough and
   • look astutely
     enough,
you also find out
   that what really obstructs you
   is
   the sum total
   of everything
   that is
   • negative and
   • destructive
     in you.

The mind
does not want
to accept this [i.e., accept that the total of everything that is negative and destructive in you is what obstructs you from a life of happiness].

The mind
has concocted
all sorts of
other explanations
for unhappiness.
Some of these theories [explaining unhappiness] may be valid as far as they go.

The mind has created theories about

- sickness, or
- neurosis

which, though quite correct in themselves, disregard the fact that it is the negativity that creates
- illness and
- neurosis.

Rejecting the "punishing deity" concept, humanity had to

- tend toward the opposite direction and
- embrace doctrines that exonerate the individual from all personal responsibility.

Thus you find yourself a victim.
When you
look deep inside you,
after having removed
your reluctance to do so –
when you
no longer
• justify and
• rationalize and
• see without any embellishment
those aspects of you
where you
• hate
    rather than
    • love,
where you
• separate yourself in your defense
    rather than
    • openly trust,
where you
• look away
    rather than
    • face,
where you
• deny
    rather than
    • affirm,
where you
• distort truth
    rather than
    • are in truth,
then you
see the place [in you]
where
you
create [your own]
• unhappiness and
• frustration.

It cannot be
any other way [than the way you create your own unhappiness by harboring hatred, by separating from others, and by looking away from, denying, and distorting the truth].
The human mind has known this [i.e., has known how people create their own unhappiness] for many centuries, but has

- misused this knowledge and
- made it [i.e., made this knowledge of how people create their own unhappiness by harboring hatred, by separating from others, and by looking away from, denying, and distorting the truth]

into a

- punitive,
- authoritarian
  judgment
  that
    - elevates
      those who judge and
    - puts down
      those who are being judged.

Religions have been particularly guilty of this distortion [i.e., this distortion of how people cause their own unhappiness].

A counter-reaction [to distortions found in religions] had to set in to reestablish the balance. However, any counter-reaction will first go beyond the truth into the opposite extreme [by saying we do not have anything to do with causing our own unhappiness], so all concepts of

- sin,
- evil, and
- personal responsibility for human unhappiness were being denied.
But now
your human condition
has advanced sufficiently
to see
again
that
• distortion of truth,
• denial of love,
• negative intentionality

are what
ultimately
create suffering.

And perhaps
now,
without
the authoritarian punitiveness,
this fact [i.e., the fact that unhappiness is caused by distortion of truth,
denial of love, and negative intentionality]
can simply be seen
for what it is.

There is
no pain
that is not
in some way
the result of
some
denial of
• truth and
denial of
• love.

There is
no pain
that is not,
in the last analysis,
caused by
• a violation of
spiritual law,
• a basic dishonesty,
and somewhere
• an ill will.
Once you fully understand this [i.e., fully understand that all pain is caused by denial of truth and love, a violation of spiritual law, a dishonesty and an ill will], you approach a crossroads.

Many of you on this path have by now come face to face with

• your basic negative attitudes,
• the negative nucleus,
• the negative cluster that is
  • one comprehensive whole.

Or perhaps it [i.e., the negative cluster] is

• a series of negativities strung together.

It [i.e., the negative cluster] is

• an ongoing chain reaction – really
  • a vicious circle.

You may start out with the concept of finding your "problems."

But when you speak of problems you really only deal with

• the manifestations,
• the results,
  of this
    • inner negative nucleus.
When you go beyond the surface manifestation – [i.e., beyond] the problematic life situation – you find, embedded within [yourself]
• a wall of protective covering,
• the lower-self
  • attitudes,
  • intents,
  • feelings,
  • thoughts and
  • actions.

It is not easy to see the negative nucleus in its entirety, its connectedness, its cause-and-effect chain-reactions.

As I said, this [i.e., seeing the negative nucleus in its entirety, connectedness, and cause-and-effect chain-reactions] requires
• dedicated,
• committed,
• wholehearted work,
• the utter will to be truthful with the self.

But once you
• arrive at this juncture and
• fully comprehend this negative nucleus, a secondary phase needs to follow.
Many of you have experienced
  • seeing and
  • becoming fully aware of
    the negativity,
  even
  • taking full responsibility for it [i.e., for the negativity] and
  • no longer projecting it [i.e., projecting the negativity] outward.

You are losing
  your self-deception.

Yet you find yourself strangely unable, as it were, to really want
to give it [i.e., give the negativity] up.

And this [phase of not really wanting to give up the negativity in you] is
  a specific phase
  that everyone following a spiritual path to unification must encounter sooner or later.

For fear that you may not want to, or not be able to, give up what distorts
  • love and
  • truth
  in your inner universe,
you must also, to a certain extent, not even want
to fully see it [i.e., not want to fully see the negativity in you that distorts the love and truth in your inner universe].
For a part of you may say,

"I know I cannot, do not wish to change.

So why should I want to see it [i.e., want to see what needs to be changed in me]? I would rather go on deceiving myself."

This is a very typical obstruction.

It is very important not to allow it [i.e., not allow this obstruction of not wanting to see what needs to change in you] to barricade your way [i.e., barricade your spiritual development].

You have worked sufficiently on the path
- to admit these resistances,
- to question the misconceptions,
- to work on them,
- to meditate,
- to make commitments toward a new way of being,
- to ask the inner grace of God to help you change.

And I might add that so much change has already taken place.

You know this.
Quite a few of you feel renewed in a way you would never have believed possible.

Life, • inwardly and • outwardly, is an • entirely new, • joyful, • rich experience, beyond your wildest fantasies.

Wherever this is the case, certain inner processes must have taken place, about which I will now speak more comprehensively in order • to make you more conscious of them [i.e., more conscious of these certain inner processes] and • to help also those to go through these [certain inner] processes who have not already done so.

Those who have arrived at the full recognition of their negative nucleus that creates their • unhappiness, their • guilt and • self-destructiveness, but cannot find the way out, will find this lecture not only • helpful but • necessary.
<table>
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<th>It [i.e., this lecture]</th>
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<tr>
<td>is meant to help you overcome</td>
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<tr>
<td>this specific hurdle of</td>
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<td>changing,</td>
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<tr>
<td>as you have already overcome</td>
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<td>so many other hurdles.</td>
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| And, I assure you my friends,                    |
| once you                                         |
| are in full possession                            |
| of the tools                                      |
| • that I am privileged to give you and            |
| • that you are privileged to make use of,         |
| there is                                          |
| no hurdle                                         |
| that cannot be overcome.                          |

| So also with                                      |
| this hurdle.                                      |

| For this larger particular                      |
| • aspect, or                                     |
| • hurdle,                                         |
| on your path,                                     |
| I want to talk                                    |
| • about the                                      |
| • true                                           |
| and                                              |
| • false concepts                                 |
| of                                               |
| • faith                                          |
| and                                              |
| • doubt –                                        |
| • about the                                      |
| duality                                          |
| that can distort                                 |
| • faith                                          |
| as well as [distort]                             |
| • doubt.                                         |
This is the topic that should, if fully understood, make the next step much easier for those who have arrived at that crossroads [i.e., that crossroads of not being able to want to see or, if you see it, not being able to want to change the negativity blocking you from happiness].

This is important, because if change is contemplated before the unpleasant, unpalatable truth is fully seen, accepted and dealt with, it [i.e., changing the negativity blocking your happiness and fulfillment] cannot work.

Such a rush [i.e., rush to change before the unpleasant truth is fully dealt with] would merely indicate that you don't want to feel the pain of the guilt, that you don't want to accept the consequences of being negative and destructive.

It [i.e., such a rush] would be a shortcut.

So the topic of this lecture can be applied only at a very specific juncture.
The popular concept of faith in this era of humanity's development is that it [i.e. is that faith]
is a blind belief in something
• you have no way of knowing,
• that you will never know.

It [i.e., faith] seems to mean that you just
• blindly – and, if I may say so,
• unintelligently and
gullibly – trust
• without rhyme or reason,
• usually out of
• wishful thinking,
• laziness and
• ignorance.

Therefore, in today's intellectual climate, faith stands in ill repute.

If faith were indeed what it is supposed to be according to this concept, there would be good reason to discard it.
If faith
were a gullible
lack of discrimination,
then of course
the intelligent person
would rightly
guard against
 anything
that might resemble faith.

For
you do not want to be
• gullible,
you do not want to be
• stupid,
you do not want to
• believe in something that
  • has no substance in reality and
  • cannot ever be
    experienced
    as truth.

Therefore
you stay on
an intellectual platform
 from which
  only what can be
  • seen,
  • touched,
  • known and
  • proven
    seems real.

And you
never
leap into
 the unknown.
Yet,
  unless
    you leap into
      the unknown,
• no expansion and
• no change
can ever
come to pass.

For, as you well know,
• growth and
• change
  always
  imply
    a momentary
     anxiety.

You
cannot
  accept
   the anxiety
if you
believe it [i.e., if you believe the anxiety]
to be
  • an end result
rather than
  • a temporary leap
    that will land you
      on firm ground.

The firm ground
  is a reality
  of a new kind
    that you have not known before.

But unless you
contemplate
  this new kind of reality
  from
    a truly firm ground
      where you can
        • rest and
        • function,
you cannot
  make the leap.
Faith, according to popular notion, implies a perpetual state of • blindness, of • not • knowing or • comprehending, of • groping in the dark, • floating on a • groundless, • unreal – • reality-less, if I may coin a word – way of being.

It is therefore extremely important to differentiate between the • false concept of faith and the • real concept of faith.

What is the real concept of faith?

In reality, faith requires a succession of several • steps or • stages.

Each of these stages is highly grounded in • intelligence and • realism.
The first stage [of faith] would be

• to contemplate
   a new way of functioning,

as opposed to

• continuing in
   the particular negative chain reaction
   that has [now] been discovered.

Let us suppose
you have found that
a substantial part of your personality
functions on
• defensive
• negative
   premises.

As you
deeply explore
your mode
• of reacting and
• of functioning
   in life
you find,
to your unpleasant surprise,
that these modes of functioning [and reacting]
are undesirable
for
• yourself and
• other people.

They [i.e., these modes of functioning and reacting]
• are destructive and

they [i.e., these modes of functioning and reacting]
• cut out life.
You
• face and
• know
  this [i.e. you face and know that these modes of functioning and reacting are destructive and cut out life],
but
  you do not know
  how else
to function.

To give up
  the only mode
  that you know,
without
  anything else to go by
  except a lofty theory,
is
  absolutely impossible
  for you.

Therefore,
you need to
  clearly understand
  what to expect
  of the stages you must go through
  • to acquire a
    new and better
  • way of functioning and
  • to inhabit a
    new and better
  • reality,
    expanded beyond
    the narrow confines
    of the fenced-in
    present.

The first step [of faith]
is to consider
  such a new way
  as
  a possibility.
You don't know yet
  • what this [new way of functioning and new reality] would be and
  • how you could do it,

but
  you consider
  that possibilities exist
  of which
    you know nothing so far.

Unless
  you extend your thought
    in that way [i.e., extend your thought in the way of new possibilities of which so far you know nothing],
you cannot
  • acquire
    new knowledge,
let alone
  • consciously
    change
      the deeper processes of functioning.

No new idea
  could ever present itself
    to a human mind
unless
  that mind
    made room for
      this possibility [for something new of which that mind as yet knows nothing].

If the mind
  is closed to
    any
      new idea,
none
  will come.
So, the process of making room for a
  • new,
  • as yet veiled, possibility
is a substantial first step in the
  • practicing and
  • acquiring of faith.

In fact, it [i.e., making room for a new possibility] is the first step of faith – the faith that something may exist beyond your present vision.

But this [first step of faith] is by no means being
  • gullible or
  • unintelligent.

Quite the opposite is true.

We will all agree that those who accept as real only what they see, sorely lack
  • intelligence,
  • wisdom and
  • imagination.

Their are indeed
  • narrow,
  • limited minds.
This [i.e., This idea that faith requires one being open to possibilities beyond one’s present knowledge, experience, and vision] may be a new idea.

You may never have thought about faith in these terms [i.e., in terms of being open to possibilities beyond your present knowledge, experience, and vision].

But I assure you, my friends, that this [i.e., that being open to possibilities beyond your present vision] is an absolute prerequisite and is part and parcel of the stages of faith.

A person’s faith undergoes a development in itself.

The
• highly developed,
• integrated
person will have attained the further stages [of faith].

What I described here is
• the springboard,
• the fundamental step on this particular ladder.
For example, you say:

"I recognize
the old way of functioning
as being
• destructive,
• negative,
• undesirable
for
• myself
and
• others’ –
it cannot be
either
• the self
or
• others,
it can only be
both [i.e., both the self and others].

"I do not know yet
• that there is another way,
and if there is [another way, I do not know],
• how it would be.

I do not
feel
such a new modality.

But perhaps
there
is another way.

Perhaps I am indeed
an expression
of a divine reality
that dwells deep in me,
even if
I have not yet experienced myself
as a divine reality.
If that possibility [i.e., If that possibility that I am a divine reality] exists,

it [i.e., that divine reality that dwells deep in me] has also
the wisdom
to convey to me
how I can find
• another and
• better
way of functioning
in this or that particular area.

I will simply
be receptive to this as a possibility."

This is
a highly realistic approach.

It is
a most effective meditation.

And it has nothing to do with
a blind belief
• in something that can never be ascertained as real,
• as something that is not grounded in reality.

It is an
• honest,
• open approach that simply makes room for alternatives not yet experienced.
I have mentioned
   in many other contexts
       that this [attitude of making room for alternative not yet experienced]
is
       the indispensable attitude
           that every serious scientist pursues.

Yet
    it is precisely
       the scientifically-minded
           who hold
             faith
         in ill repute
because
    they have encountered
       the false version of it.

But
    the real steps in faith,
       that make faith
           a dynamic road in itself,
are
    completely compatible with
       the scientific turn of mind.

To consider alternatives
   that are as yet unknown
is
    • an honest attitude.

It is
    • objective.

It is
    • humble.
So the first leap into the
• unknown – and
into the
• new –
takes place
in this frame of mind [i.e., in the frame of mind that encourages one to consider alternatives that are not yet known and have not been experienced].

This is not to say that there will be no anxiety, for all new experience is connected with anxiety, but it is an anxiety that is
• quickly and
• easily overcome.

For example, if you find yourself secure only if you
• issue forth negative judgments,
if you
• hate and
• put down others,
you can apply this first step.

You can consider that maybe there is another way [to be secure other than to put down others or hate] and open yourself to new insights.

You will find that you can be secure without destructiveness [i.e., without putting down or judging others].
You may have to work hard
to establish
real
self-respect [as a new and positive basis for your security] –
and this approach [i.e., this approach of being open to new possibilities]
is a sure way
to attain it.

But no matter
how hard you work [for a possibly new and positive basis of security],
it is
always
worth it,
for you
pay literally with your life
for the negative kind of "security."

When you sincerely
do this –
  • grope and
  • wait,
  • patiently wait
    for the revelation from within –
you will find
a new modality.

Of that you can be sure.
The time will come when you will discover this new modality in which you can function in an entirely new way in which there is no conflict between
• security and
• self-esteem in the false sense (by
  • being negative and
  • hating)

and
• openness,
• positiveness, and
• love.

To find this new firm ground that is conflictless, you must make a leap into an
• unknown,
• new possibility.
Merely
  • opening yourself to
    a new alternative
    in principle, and
  • feeling ready
    to abandon an
    • old and
    • accustomed
      mode of operation [i.e., to abandon the negative mode of operation],

is already
  a small leap,
because,
  no matter
    how tentatively,
you have then
  left
    the pseudo-firm ground
    of your old security [based on judging and putting down others]
      which had seemed
        the only way possible for you.

The second step in faith
  requires
    more of a leap.

With this leap
  you open yourself
    to the divine ground
      within you

so that it [i.e., so that the divine ground within you]
  can supply
    the knowledge
      your intellect
        cannot find.
I recapitulate briefly:

The first step [in faith]
   is to make room for
   a modality
   other than
   the negative one
   you
   have discovered [in your self-confrontation].

In the second step [in faith]
   you allow
   the divine self
   to supply the answer.

If you
   take this [second] step
   sincerely,
you will catch
   occasional
   glimpses
   into
   • the divine self within,
   • how it is
   • how it feels
   • how it operates.

Then you will
   • forget again and
   • be hurled back into
     the old pseudo-security
     of your negativity [i.e., hurled back into judging and
     putting down others to establish your old pseudo-security].
Again and again you will have to grope your way back through these [first two] stages, until, in order to make this newly-glimpsed reality
• your own, and
• into a permanent home ground,
you undertake an even greater leap of
• courage and honesty.

That [even greater leap of courage and honesty] is the third step
in the • venture and • growth of faith.

It expresses:
"Yes, I have experienced something new, but I am not yet able to hold on to it. It is not yet my own permanent ground.

To make it my ground, I fully surrender to the greater reality in the universe."
I let go of
• the known safety valves,
• the familiar ego habits
  of finding
    • security and
    • self-fulfillment
  in
  at least partially
  negative ways [i.e., by judging and putting down others].

I surrender to
  the divine power
  and let it guide me.

I dedicate my life
  to
    • truth and
    • love
  for its own sake."

That is
  the big leap –
    a leap
    that must be repeated
    many times
    until
    • it is
      no leap at all, and
    • you realize that
      it only seemed that way [i.e., it only seemed a big leap]
      in the imaginary separation
      of the little ego.

At this point [i.e., in this third step of faith]
  you are no longer in
    the total unknown,
  because
    you [now] have gained
    glimpses
    of reality
    in the course of the second step.
If you truly question yourself with all the
• logic and
• reason
at the disposal of your mind,
you will see that you are not really
taking so much of a risk.

If there is no such thing as a divine reality,
what do you have to lose trusting in it?

You would find nothing but what you already know [i.e., in trusting you would merely find that divine reality does not exist – which is what you assumed in the first place].

But [on the other hand] should you indeed find that it [i.e., find that divine reality in fact] exists, if its [i.e., if divine reality’s] manifestations are no illusion, then surrendering to it [i.e., then surrendering to divine reality] is indeed the only
• wise and
• reasonable thing to do.

Then surrendering to it [i.e., then surrendering to divine reality] will only temporarily appear as an abdication of your selfhood.
Soon you will discover
that what you
always perceived
as constituting
your selfhood
is the most
• dependent and
• weak
    of all imaginable ways of existing.

Do you not
constantly
discover your dependency
on other human beings
who are as
• ignorant and
• floundering
    as yourself?

But
surrendering to
the divine life
will make you aware
that in this [i.e., in this divine life]
is your
real identity
in which
you will find
new
• security,
new
• joys and
• pleasures,
new
• creativity
    of which
    you know nothing so far.
Only then [i.e., only when you are aware that this divine life is your real identity, an identity in which you find new security, joys, pleasures and creativity] do you find
• true and
• full selfhood – after you make that leap in self-surrender to a larger Self that is truly you in the best sense.

Since divine reality is
• truth and
• love,

• truth and
• love must be the motto to which you totally surrender all of your being.

When you come to this point, you will see that the alternatives are simple.
Your not surrendering to • truth and • love as divine attributes, to • divine will, is based almost exclusively on • self-seeking and • vanity –

in other words, what others will think of you precedes consideration of • truth and • love.

You do not abandon the little immediate advantage for the sake of • truth and • love.

Thus you do not make the leap in faith – [faith] that by being true to • the divine will, to • truth and • love, more profound "advantages" on all levels will accrue.
Of course,
[in making the leap in faith]
you may not notice the results immediately.

For
you must make that leap
into the unknown
for the sake of
• truth and
• love,
for the sake of
• the will of God.

Dedicate
all your
• life,
all your
• actions,
all your
• directions,
all your
• goals
to the
• truth and
• love
that are essentially
divine
• attributes and
• expressions,
• inside and
• outside of you.

That is
the greater leap
that will land you on
• new ground –
• the divine ground.
It [i.e., this greater leap that will land you on new ground, on divine ground] will bring you into a new reality so widely expanded that it defies your present imagination.

You cannot even conceive yet of what it means to function without conflict because you are so used to living in perpetual conflict that you unconsciously • take conflicts for granted and • know nothing else.

You suffer from so many conflicts when you do not abide by • truth and • love.

They [i.e., these many conflicts] tear you apart, but only as you gradually grow in self-awareness do you become attuned to seeing this [i.e., seeing that these many conflicts are tearing you apart] — at first without knowing exactly • what the trouble is and • how your life could be changed.
I now give you a key.

Those conflicts pull out your life force and strangle it [i.e., those conflicts strangle your life force].

That [i.e., those conflicts pulling out your life force and strangling it] need not be if you make the leap to

• truth and
• love

as the ultimate reason for being in your own life.

When you do this consistently, you arrive at the fourth step, where faith becomes an experienced reality,

• where it [i.e., where faith, experienced as reality] is already a proven fact that is so securely anchored in you that no one can take it away.
The difference between

- this state [in the fourth step of faith]

and

- the first glimpses [of true reality]
  gained on the second step [of faith]

is that

those glimpses [of true reality gained on the second step of faith] are known to be real –
  very real –
  while
  they happen to you,

but

when you

- sink back and
- lose this
  "state of grace,"
  as it is often being called,

you

- doubt again and
- think that perhaps
  it [i.e., think that that momentary glimpse of true reality] was
    - illusion or
    - imagination or
    - coincidence.

Or you imagine

- you have dreamed the whole thing and
- the tangible things that happened
  would have happened anyway.

Here the

false doubt
  comes in,
about which
  we shall speak shortly.
In the fourth step [of faith] you do not experience this [i.e., do not experience falling back into false doubt that arises in the second step of faith] at all.

What you have gained [in this fourth stage of faith] remains your reality.

You know it is more real than anything else you have ever
• experienced and
• known.

Even if you • lose this good state temporarily and • must revert in the spiral movement to the residues of negativity,

at this stage [four of faith] you always know that which is • real and that which is • false.

There is no longer any confusion.

You now know the glory of the truth of God.
This newly revealed reality
defies
the narrow confines
of the little mind.

It [i.e., this newly revealed reality]
stands on
much firmer ground
than that [of the little mind].

If
the whole world
confronts the
outer
reality you experience,
you may begin
to doubt that [i.e., may begin to doubt the outer reality you experience],

but you
cannot doubt any longer
the reality
of the
inner
universe
you have gained
as your home ground,
as a result of
your consistent surrender to
it [i.e., your consistent surrender to the reality of the inner universe you have gained as your home ground].

When you have arrived at
the fourth step in the venture of faith,
you can never doubt this reality [i.e., the reality of the inner universe].

The
• proofs and the
• experiences [of the reality of the inner universe you have gained in step four]
are too real;
	hey [i.e., the proofs and experiences of the reality of the inner universe]
tie up
all loose ends
in a way
imagination
could never accomplish.
Do not shy away from the momentary anxiety that the leap into an
• unknown
• new
  reality
  induces.

Do it [i.e., Leap into an unknown new reality] for the sake of
• truth and
• love.

Or, if you will, for the sake of
• God – your own, inner
  Godself.

Now let us look at the other side of this dichotomy: the question of doubt.

Doubt exists in the
• real and
• constructive sense, of course,
for if you lived without doubt, you would indeed be gullible.

That [i.e., never doubting anything] would fit into the category of the
• wrong and
• distorted
  version of faith.
Also,

- gullibility,
- the lack of right doubt,
contains
many negative aspects.

It [i.e., the lack of right doubt]
contains
- wishful thinking,
- not wanting to
  - accept and
  - deal with
    any unpleasant aspects of
      - the self or
      - others, or
      - life in general.

This [i.e., wishful thinking, not wanting to deal with unpleasant aspects of the self, others, or life in general]
comes from laziness.

The person who does not doubt in the right way wishes to avoid the responsibility
- of making
  - decisions,
  - choices, and
- of establishing autonomy.

The person who doubts in the right way moves toward faith and is in faith.
But the person who doubts 
in the wrong way 
• creates a tremendous split.

The question here arises 
not only 
• what you doubt, 
but also 
• how you doubt and 
• why you doubt.

What are the real motives for doubting?

For example, you doubt the existence of 
• a supreme intelligence, 
• a creative universal spirit.

With this attitude your claim is that you doubt, 

but you really mean that you "know" it [i.e., that you “know” that a supreme intelligence or a creative universal spirit] does not exist – which of course is impossible, for you cannot know this.
It is also dishonest [to say that you “know” that a supreme intelligence does not exist] because you take your
• very limited present perceptions
  as
• the final reality.

Moreover, such a statement [that a supreme intelligence does not exist] always contains
  a further dishonesty –
    and that is
    the hidden stake
    in such a belief.

It [i.e., this statement that you “know” that a supreme intelligence does not exist] is as personally tinged by wishful thinking
  as
  the wrong kind of faith is.

There are numerous reasons for this personal stake, as for example the fear
  of having to face one day what the personality frantically avoids facing now.

There is wishful thinking in believing that
  • life ends,
  that
  • nothing has any rhyme or reason,
    because then
    nothing matters anyway.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>34</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>So</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>&quot;faith&quot;</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in a non-God [i.e., “faith” that there is, in fact, no supreme intelligence or creative universal spirit]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in order to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hope for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no consequences [for what one does in or with this life].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>When people</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the value of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a spiritual path of self-confrontation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• although possibly [do] not [deny]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the existence of God,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>harbors the hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that such [a spiritual path of self-] confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• can be avoided,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• is unnecessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doubt of this kind</strong> [i.e., doubting that a spiritual path of self-confrontation is necessary or could serve any purpose]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is seldom doubted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>It</strong> [i.e., doubt – or denial – that a spiritual path of self-confrontation is both necessary and serves an important purpose]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• is always justified with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;this happens to be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my belief [i.e., my belief happens to be that a spiritual path of self-confrontation is neither necessary nor serves any useful purpose],</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>which is as good as yours,&quot; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• is presented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this kind of assumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>were arrived at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>truly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• honestly and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• deeply.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
If you doubt something
that you do not
want
to know –
for whatever reason –
then
your doubt
is dishonest.

This
wrong kind of
• doubt
has a lot in common with the
wrong kind of
• faith.

Both [the wrong kind of doubt and the wrong kind of faith]
are governed by
wishful thinking.

Very often
those who are
proud of their doubting
because
they do not wish to appear gullible
in the eyes of others
never
doubt
their doubts.

So you
must question
your doubts.

Do you have
a stake
in what you doubt?

What are
the honest reasons
for your doubts?
On what real considerations do you honestly base these doubts?

If you doubt your doubts, if you question them [i.e., If you question your doubts], you will arrive at the truth that governs you in this respect [i.e., in respect to why you doubt] and thus you approach faith.

If you doubt others – rather than [doubt or challenge] your own • motivations, • distortions and • opinions, your • subjective judgments and • negativities – you deny the truth in yourself.
Only when you are in your truth can you lose the self-doubt that gnaws behind the
• suspicions and
• doubts
you harbor about others.

This projected self-doubt [i.e. the self-doubt you project out onto others in doubting them]

must not be confused with true
• intuition and
• perception,
which
• feels very differently and
• leads to a very different
• expression and
• interchange.
If you use pseudo-intelligence to substantiate [and justify] your doubts, distrusts and suspicions, in order to avoid the discomfort of self-confrontation [i.e., to avoid the discomfort of discovering your motivation for and stake in doubting and distrusting], you create a greater split between you and reality, and therefore between you and truth. Thus you manufacture suffering and discontent and a vague unease that you cannot pinpoint.

We have here a typical dualistic picture. We have apparently two opposites – faith and doubt.
Religion will glibly say
• faith is "right"
  and
• doubt is "wrong."

Intellectually-minded people will say equally glibly that
• faith is "wrong"
  and
• doubt is "right."

The two factions quarrel.

Each [faction] believes
• it is right;
  • it has the truth.

Yet
• a real
  and
• a false version
    exists on both sides.

In the real version,
• faith
  and
• doubt are not mutually exclusive opposites.

They [i.e., the real versions of faith and doubt] complement each other.
The real kind of doubt
   • selects,
   • weighs,
   • differentiates,
   • gropes for the truth –
     not shying away from
     the mental labor
     of dealing with reality.

This leads to
   the various [i.e., to various of the four]
   steps of faith.

In each of these steps
   the right kind
   of doubt
   is necessary.

For example,
   when you
     hesitate
     to leap [into the unknown],

you must [come to]
   • doubt
     • your fear and
     • your assumption
     that this fear [i.e., you must come to doubt your fear and assumption that what you fear to be the ultimate reality] may be
     the ultimate reality.

When you tend toward
   the lazy kind of faith,
   doubt
   must awaken you
   into mental activity.
When you tend to doubt
   in the destructive way,
faith
must protect you
from
• being submerged in it [i.e., from being submerged in doubt] and
• blotting out
   the moments of truth
   you have already experienced.

There is a key
to how you can
always
find
the
• unity,
the
• right faith and
• right doubt,
and thereby
come out of
• ill-placed faith and
• ill-placed doubt.

That key
I have given you.

It is
your dedication to
• truth and
• love.
Long before you experience

and therefore [long before you] believe in a divine spirit that governs and dwells in all that is,

you can safely use truth and love as your guideposts, as your directives to govern your life, to surrender to, to let go of something untruthful and unloving into that which is truthful and loving.
As you make
• truth
and
• love
the center of everything you do,
you will experience
• the living God within,
• the strength
• the health, and
• the know-how
to solve all your problems and
to get out of the negativities you seem
• locked into,
• unable to give up.

That venture in faith is the movement that combines
• faith and
• doubt as one complementing whole in the service of
• truth and
• love.

Now I shall leave you with the blessings of the divine spirit that dwells within each one of you.
Believe in this spirit,

have faith in its [i.e., have faith in this spirit's] existence,

and it [i.e., and this spirit] will make itself known to you.

For it [i.e., For this spirit] is the greatest reality that exists.

Nothing could be
• more real and
• more immediate.

You are all blessed,

all of you.

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