

Pathwork Lecture 26: Finding One's Faults

1996 Edition, Original Given March 28, 1958

This Pathwork lecture is rendered in an **expanded poetic format**, what I call a **Devotional Version** of the lecture. In this sense it is **my interpretation** of the **intent** of the lecture. I may have interpreted portions differently from you, and when this is the case, I ask you to ponder the words for **your own interpretation**.

I did this Devotional Version so I can take the words into my heart, phrase by phrase, much as I would in reading poetry -- **devotionally**. *I invite you to slowly read and ponder this rendition of the text – with an open heart to experience the Pathwork Guide's Presence, Wisdom and Love emerging from among the words. May the Pathwork Guide's Wisdom come to live you.*

For clarity: The **original text** is in **bold, italicized, and mostly underlined**. [My interpretations and intended clarifications are in brackets, italicized, sometimes underlined, but never bolded.]

To learn more of my Devotional Version and to access the lectures I have rendered in this form, go to <http://www.garyvollbracht.com/quotes/pathwork-lectures-expanded-versions/>

Blessings on your journey, Gary

¶	Content
03	<p><u>Greetings</u> <u>in the name of</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>God and</u>• <u>Jesus Christ.</u> <p><u>I bring you blessings,</u> <u>my dear friends.</u></p>
04	<p><u>The last time [Lecture 25 – The Path: Initial Steps, Preparation, and Decisions]</u> <u>I talked about</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>the difficulty</u> <u>of this path and</u>• <u>the dangers of approaching it</u> <u>with the illusion</u> <u>that</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>a few meditations and</u>• <u>some miracle-formula</u> <u>will make</u> <u>all your earthly troubles</u> <u>disappear.</u>

by Eva Broch Pierrakos

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It is equally far from the truth
to overestimate
the difficulties on this path.

I can see that
some of my friends
have become a little afraid [of embarking upon this path],
and this
unjustified fear [of this path]
serves as an excuse
for the lower self
that always
wants to avoid

- *purification and*
- *improvement.*

05

Now, my dear friends,
let us examine
the fears [of embarking upon this path]
you may have.

Certainly
the path is difficult,
but
God is

- *wise and*
- *just*

and He will
not give you
more than you can

- *bear or*
- *accomplish.*

That [i.e., what your are given to bear or accomplish], of course,
varies
with each individual.

The higher
your development,
the stronger you are
and therefore
the more
can be expected of you.

But
if you are still weak,
perhaps
the smallest effort
will be sufficient for you.

At any rate,
none of you
can truly achieve
happiness
in this life
if
you do not accomplish,
spiritually speaking,
the maximum
according to your destiny.

This path
with my

- instruction and
- guidance

should help you
reach this end [i.e., reach true happiness by accomplishing
the maximum, spiritually speaking, according to your destiny].

Therefore,
the proper attitude
for you to take,
if you happen to fear
that this path
is too much for you,
is that you
put yourself
into the hands of God
and ask Him.

Let Him
decide for you [whether or not this path is too difficult for you].

But how
very few people
do this [i.e., put themselves into the hands of God and ask Him
to make this decision for them]

when
the mood of doubt
overtakes them!

Then [i.e., when the mood of doubt overtakes you]
you are
all
very quick
to make your own decision,
albeit a temporary one in many cases,
that this path
is too much for you,
and the thought does not even occur to you
to ask God
for His will
in this respect.

06

Another great misunderstanding
is the mistaken idea
that to follow the path I am showing you
means
neglecting your life
in other ways.

You see, my dear friends,
I can observe
the forms
of your

- **thoughts and**
- **feelings.**

I can see
your lower self
that fights
constantly

against
the right decisions,
delivering all sorts of

- excuses and
- pretexts,

while you
remain unaware of

- why you have these thoughts [i.e., *why you have these lower-self excuses and pretexts*] and
- what is really behind them.

Some of you may believe
that a certain amount of

- time and
 - effort
- for your
spiritual development

will take too much time
away from
your daily struggle for livelihood;

you think you
may not have enough strength left
for your
professional efforts
and thus fear that
your finances may suffer.

Another may believe
that not enough time remains
to enjoy life,
and so on.

But this way of thinking
is so very wrong
because

- *spiritual development*
in general, and
- *this path*
in particular,

is not
an extra activity in your life
that you simply
add on to
your other activities,
thus diminishing
the

- *strength,*
- *time,*
- *effort, and*
- *zest*

that would otherwise
be available to you
for all your other

- *duties and*
- *pleasures.*

Actually,
it is quite the contrary,
my friends.

07

The truth
is that this
path of purification
represents
the foundation
of your life.

It [i.e., this path of purification]
is
the ground you walk on,
symbolically speaking!

When you decide
to take it [i.e., to take this path of purification],
you simply
shift the tracks of your life,
if I may say so,
into different channels.

After a while,
even though
your main problems
will not disappear
from one day
to the next,
this [i.e., taking this path of purification]
has the effect of
awakening in you
a new life spark
that furnishes you
with a heretofore
unfamiliar

- strength,
- acumen,
- vitality, and
- ability to enjoy life

as you have never done before.

Thus

- you will do
better work
in your profession;
- you will get
more benefit from
your times of leisure;
- you will get
more pleasure out of life
whatever you may do,

whereas
now
life is still
more or less flat
for most of you.

These [better results in all areas of your life – your profession,
your times of leisure, and the pleasure in your life]
are the results
I can promise
if you work
spiritually
in the way I am showing you.

They [i.e., these better results]
won't become apparent
at once,
but only

- after a certain time,
- after some
inner
victories.

Then you will see
that this path
is well worth taking,

- even from
your selfish point of view, and
- even though
your main conflicts
will have not yet disappeared.

08

This [i.e., this path being well worth taking]
is so
because
on this path
you will
eventually
find out
where
in your

- deeper feelings,
- reactions, and
- thoughts,

if not in your

- deeds,

you have broken
many a spiritual law.

This realization [that you have broken many a spiritual law in your deeper feelings, reactions and thoughts]

will enable you to

gradually

change

- *inner currents and*
- *emotional reactions,*

and this will

automatically

free a

• *strength and*

• *life force*

that was previously

• *locked or*

• *blocked.*

So I do

not promise you

a miracle

that will be given to you

as a reward

from heaven,

but show you

• *plainly and*

• *logically*

that this path

cannot help but work out

because

it is based on

the law of

• *cause and*

• *effect*

which works quite

• *naturally and*

• *impersonally.*

*So I ask you
not to consider
the decision to take this path
as some additional activity in your life,
such as
taking up some new kind of lessons
that might rob you of
• time and
• effort
you could give
to other
• necessary or
• desirable
things.*

*Consider rather
this path
as the foundation of your life;
it is supposed to
make it [i.e., make your life]
into a well-integrated whole.*

*For if you can solve
your
inner
• problems and
• errors,
as you can
only
do on this path,
you must eventually also solve
your
outer
problems.*

Because
you have
often
wasted many lives, and
because
wrong habits of

- thinking and
- feeling

have implanted themselves
deeper
and deeper
in you
from one incarnation
to another,

the knots
have become

- tighter and
- more tangled.

Therefore
it must take time

- to dissolve
these knots,
- to loosen them up,
- to understand
the workings
of all your
inner currents
in relationship to
spiritual
 - law and
 - truth.

However,
if and when
you have accomplished this [*i.e., if and when you have understood the
working of all your inner currents
in relationship to spiritual law and truth]
to some degree,
your
outer
problems
must
cease.*

*This [cessation of your outer problems]
will certainly
not happen
when you
merely
put more
• effort and
• concentration
on the
outer
problem alone,
instead of
finding out
the corresponding
inner
problem
which is
always
the cause
of the
outer
one.*

09

*By the same token,
you will get so much more out of
all the good things in life –
• happiness,
• joy,
• pleasure –
• if your soul
becomes healthy again,
• if your
inner
reactions
can conform to
spiritual law.*

*Only then [i.e., only when your inner reactions
conform to spiritual law]
will you be capable of
happiness.*

For how many people
are capable of
happiness?

Very few,
my friends.

The majority of people
are actually
as scared of
• happiness
as of
• unhappiness.

You desire
great happiness,
all of you,
but
the farther out of reach it is,
the more desirable it seems to you;
whereas
if once in a while
there seems to be a chance
to actually realize such happiness,
you then
shrink away from it.

Oh yes, my friends,
this is so.

Think back
in your life;
examine your feelings
in these rare moments [i.e., in these rare moments where there was a chance
for you to realize the happiness you long for];
analyze them [i.e., analyze your feelings in such moments]
from this angle [from the angle that you are afraid of happiness and ultimately
shrink away from happiness when happiness becomes possible]
and you will see
that I am right.

This [shrinking away in fear from a chance to realize the happiness you long for] is, of course, a symptom that the soul

- *is sick and*
- *has deviated from one or more spiritual laws.*

For only those who follow a very important spiritual law, embrace life

- *wholeheartedly,*
- *without fear,*
- *without self-pity,*
- *without being afraid of being hurt.*

And only those who can do so [i.e., who can follow a very important spiritual law] are capable of experiencing real happiness.

10

So everything you do in life will have more

- *flavor,*

more

- *awareness, and*

more

- *life spark*

if you

- *follow the path of*
 - *self-knowledge and*
 - *perfection, and*
 - *do what God wants you to do.*

It [i.e., following the path of self-knowledge and perfection, and doing what God wants you to do]

will not take more time
than is reasonable
according to
your life circumstances.

All of you
without exception
are capable,

with

- a little willpower and
- determination and
- proper organization
of your everyday life,

to spend an average of
half an hour a day
on your spiritual development.

You spend time
on your physical body,

- feed it,
- rest it, and
- cleanse it;

you certainly do not feel
that this takes something away from
your

- other duties or
- pleasures.

You take it for granted
that this [care of your physical body]
is a

- necessary,
- self-evident
part of your life.

Yet,
when the question arises
whether to do the same
for your soul –
and less time is necessary for that
than for your body –

then
• fears,
• doubts, and
• questions
bar your way.

But they [i.e., But fears, doubts, and questions]
cannot do so [i.e., cannot bar your way to spiritual development and caring
for your soul]

if you take the trouble
to think reasonably
about
this matter of spiritual development,
my friends.

You are
not
thinking reasonably
about it [i.e., about your spiritual development], however
because
you do not evaluate
these doubts [concerning your soul and your spiritual development]
as to their [i.e. as to these doubts']
proper merit.

Instead
you have them [i.e., you have these doubts concerning your soul
and your spiritual development]
because
you are inspired by
your own
lower self.

	<p><u>As long as</u> <u>you do not</u> <u>recognize</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>how the lower self works,</u>• <u>how it manifests, and</u>• <u>in what devious ways</u> <p><u>it hides behind handy excuses [i.e., excuses not to commit to this path, that is, excuses not to commit to your spiritual development that is needed to expose the lower self and its devious ways],</u></p> <p><u>you will</u> <u>not</u></p> <p><u>be able to master it [i.e., not be able to master the lower self],</u> <u>regardless</u> <u>how sincere</u> <u>your love for God may be.</u></p>
11	<p><u>Love for God</u> <u>is wonderful</u> <u>if it manifests</u> <u>in beautiful</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>prayer and</u>• <u>meditation.</u> <p><u>But</u> <u>the work</u> <u>has to be done</u> <u>too.</u></p> <p><u>What is the work?</u></p> <p><u>This is the work, my friends.</u></p> <p><u>To master</u> <u>your lower self</u> <u>is the work</u> <u>that Jesus meant mainly.</u></p> <p><u>To do good</u> <u>to other people</u> <u>is also part of it.</u></p>

But
can you do
really good to other people
as long as
your impure currents
force you
into thinking things
that are
not according to truth?

No.

You may be able to perform
a good act
and consider this
a good deed.

Yet it is
not really
a good deed
if it is not supported by
purified
feelings.

And purified
feelings
are your goal
on this path,
for which
you do
not need
more than

- a certain amount of time every day,
- a certain amount of willpower, and
- a certain amount of
 - detached and
 - reasonable,

common sense thinking.

12

Some of you
have really made
this wholehearted decision [to follow this spiritual path of purification
and thereby to master your lower self].

Some of you
have not.

But for both groups [i.e., for both those who have made this wholehearted decision
to follow this path of purification and for those who have not],

it is important
to understand
how to deal with
the lower self
that

- works in the subconscious mind and
- sends
only subterfuges [i.e., expedients used to evade a rule,
or to escape a consequence]
to the surface [i.e., to awareness and consciousness].

For
even those of you
who are sincerely willing
to walk this
path of purification
will have
many fights
with this lower self of yours
along the way.

Perhaps
not any more [fights]
as far as
taking this path on the whole
is concerned,
but [fights] about
individual

- currents and
- trends

within you
which
the lower self
does not want to part with.

So it is important
that you
train yourself
to understand
what is underneath
these
• doubts or
• fears
that want to
• lead you
away from the path [of purification] –
or at least
• make it more difficult for you
to gain
the necessary
self-understanding.

13

So this [i.e., So having fights with the lower self that would keep you from progress
on this path of purification]
is one factor,
my dear friends,
that you have to
• deal with
in the first place, and
• keep in mind
at all times.

Learn to see through
your
• doubts and
your
• hesitancy;

learn to see
the real meaning of
an occasional stubbornness
when you
do not want
to understand something.

And
the more
you come to know
• your own
entire
personality,
• what you
really are and
• who
you are,

the easier it will become
for you to
overcome
whatever is in
your lower self
that
constantly
draws you away from
this inner work.

14

Here are thoughts
I could observe in some of my friends
between the last lecture and tonight:

- "Isn't it enough
if I am a decent person?"
- God loves us all and
if I just try
to
 - be good and
 - behave right,that should be sufficient.
- Why do I have to
go through all this [work of purification and dealing with
the lower self]?"

No, my dear ones,
it [i.e., this limited way of thinking about your spiritual life]
may be sufficient for
some people,

but
do not ever forget
that for anyone
who is guided to hear this [lecture],
there is also
an obligation involved.

And this obligation
means that
more is expected of you
than
just being
what is commonly considered
a decent person
who does not harm other people.

That
the fulfillment of this [larger] obligation
works out for your own good,
because
by overcoming your lower self
you free yourself
of your own chains,
is something else again.

But let us remain
for the moment
with the argument
that I have observed among some of you
[namely,] that it should suffice
for spiritual development
if you [merely]

- are good and
- do not harm others.

What constitutes
"harm to others"?

To harm others is
not only

- to steal from them, or
- to say ugly things behind their backs, or
- to kill, or
- anything like that.

You may harm another person
by not having
enough love.

And no
• outer and
• forced
kindliness
to make up for
this lack [of love]

will change
the fact
that
this love

is still
missing
in your soul.

Or, you may harm another
by not having
enough understanding,
by being
blind.

For
if you are blind
to yourself [*including blind to your faults and weaknesses*],
you are performe
blind
to your surroundings.

And
each individual fault of yours [*to which you are currently blind*]
stands in the way of
unfolding
pure

- love,
- insight, and
- understanding.

In this way
you do harm others.

15

But it is not as simple
as all that,
my friends.

Imagine

- the love of God,
- this marvelous light
that lives
in the soul
of each individual.

And imagine how
the lower self
stands
in-between

- you

and

- this light [*i.e., this light and love that lives within you*] and
- the beneficial effect
it [*i.e., this love and marvelous light that lives within you and*
its beneficial effect, if made available,]
could have
on your surroundings.

	<p><u>You</u> <u>not only</u> <u>cause harm</u> <u>through</u> <u>actual</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>bad deeds,</u>• <u>bad thoughts, and</u>• <u>impure feelings,</u><u>but also</u> <u>by lacking the</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>love and</u>• <u>understanding</u><u>you</u> <u>could be capable of having</u> <u>if you</u> <u>fulfilled your maximum potential</u> <u>in this incarnation.</u></p> <p><u>That [i.e., fulfilling your maximum potential in this incarnation]</u> <u>means</u> <u>following</u> <u>this path of self-development.</u></p>
16	<p><u>Not only</u> <u>those traits</u> <u>which are commonly called</u> <u>faults</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>are a hindrance for you,</u><u>and thus</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>directly or</u>• <u>indirectly</u>• <u>harm others,</u><u>but also</u> <u>your fears,</u> <u>which are not generally</u> <u>considered to be</u> <u>faults.</u></p>

You do not realize that
your fears
cause
great harm,
not only
• in your own life
but also
• in the lives of others.

Your fears
also
hide
your light of
• love,
• understanding, and
• truth.

So,
being on this path
is not only
a matter of
overcoming
your character weaknesses.

Overcoming
your own fears
is of equal importance,
for as long as
there is fear
in your heart,
you harm
other people.

[With fear in your heart]
You actually
send out
certain rays
that have
a very unsavory effect.

Do you know that,
for the spirit,
fear
has a
very ugly smell?

*And do you know
that*

- *your spirit,*
- *your subconscious mind,*
 - *smells*
the fear of others
all the time and
- *is affected by it*
constantly?

You can only
guard yourself
against

- *this fear emanation*
of others and
- *your own consequent*
negative reactions

if you
oust your own fear [and its emanation to others];

for then

- *you will*
consciously
understand the fear of others and
- *it [i.e., the fear of others and its emanation toward you]*
will not harm you any more.

You will make
your instinctive awareness
of their fear

into
an intuition
that will reach
your entire consciousness.

But as long as
you live
• instinctively,
and therefore
• unknowingly,
• you remain unaware
of all fears,
• you are gravely affected
by them [affected by all fears]
and thus
• you will, in turn,
produce bad effects
on others.

Thus
a vicious circle
is set in motion
that can only be broken
if
• self-awareness and
• understanding about these facts
are gained
in sufficient degree.

If this [inner work of self-awareness and understanding]
is not done,
the fears of others
reaching you
will increase
your own fears;
this sets up
a hard wall
between
• you
and
• your fellow-creatures
that eliminates
all divine aspects
that could be spread outward
from
• your own soul,
as well as
from
• the souls of others.

	<p><u><i>For there is nothing as contagious as inner currents, be they</i></u> • <u><i>positive</i></u> <u><i>or</i></u> • <u><i>negative.</i></u></p>
17	<p><u><i>So do not believe that it is sufficient to be merely a decent person.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>This term [“decent person”] varies greatly according to</i></u> • <u><i>a person's overall spiritual development and</i></u> • <u><i>what he or she is capable of delivering in</i></u> • <u><i>fulfillment and</i></u> • <u><i>purification.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>I mean that God evaluates each individual differently.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Furthermore, do not imagine that you do not harm anyone by simply refraining from the more obvious evil deeds.</i></u></p>

*As long as
there is
fear
in your heart
you do harm
in subtle ways
that are not obvious,
but are nevertheless
just as damaging.*

18

*Now, my dear friends,
I want you to think about
all that I have said to you.*

*And,
if you really want to follow this path,
it is not sufficient
for you to read this lecture
just once.*

*You will find
that you will need to
• reread
certain sentences
several times and
• meditate
on them [i.e., meditate on these certain sentences]
so that
you gain
• enlightenment and
• deeper understanding.*

*Do not
just read the lecture once
and forget it.*

*Some of these sentences
have deep meaning
for you
personally,
and therefore
it is important
that you work with them.*

Often
it may be
very necessary for you
to go back to
a few previous lectures,
if there is any particular point
which you

- still have
not quite digested and
- still need
to deliberate on.

You yourself
will know when this is necessary.

19

I have promised to show you
how you should go about
actually starting on this path.

There are
many ways,
and each individual
reacts to them differently.

Of course,
in these general lectures
I cannot give

- individualized or
- personal

guidance
for the manner in which
each of you
can work on this path.

But
I will give you certain basic facts to go by
as you make
your own plan.

You do not have to work
according to my words
to the letter;
certain details of

- method and
- timing

may vary
for each one of you.

This can be all right
as long as
you keep the basic structure in mind.

20

You all know that
to gain
self-knowledge
is of
imperative importance.

Now,
how can this be done?

The first step
will be
to think
as objectively as you possibly can
about

- yourself,

about
all your

- good qualities and

all your

- faults.

Write down a list,
as I have often advised,
because
this writing down

- helps you to
 - concentrate on and
 - condense

what you have found out so far and

- will prevent your losing your hold
on the knowledge.

The written words
in black and white
can

- shed a
new light of understanding, and
- promote
a tiny little bit of
detachment
in your consideration of
yourself.

Later on,
when you have gained further knowledge
about

- yourself and
about
- your subconscious trends,

you will be able to
combine certain factors
of your
first-found knowledge,
provided it is

- clearly and
- concisely
expressed.

21

After
you have done this conscientiously,
the next step
would be
to ask

- someone else,
- someone who knows you very well,

to tell you
what he or she
honestly
thinks about you.

I know that it takes courage to do that.

Consider this
your first effort
to overcome
a little bit
of your pride.

By doing so [i.e., by thus overcoming a little bit of your pride],
you will have attained
some victory
that will already
free you
of one little inner chain.

22

I would suggest, my friends,
that

- all of you
who are here, and
- all of you
who
 - read these words and
 - cannot be present at these sessions personally
but are also willing
to walk this path,

get together with
one or two other friends
who are interested in
reaching the same goal.

Some of you
who read these words
may not be able
to belong to this group.

If you

- are all alone
in this spiritual quest, and
- wonder how to find
the proper person to work with,

I advise you
to pray for guidance.

You will see what happens.

	<p><u>For whoever</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>needs help and</u>• <u>knocks on the door,</u> <u>knowing how to ask,</u> <u>will be answered.</u> <p><u>I can promise you that</u> <u>if your wish</u> <u>is sincere,</u> <u>you will be guided.</u></p>
23	<p><u>As far as</u> <u>my friends who are here</u> <u>are concerned,</u> <u>you should not have a problem</u> <u>because</u> <u>you can always</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>arrange to get together with</u> <u>one other person here</u> <u>and perhaps</u>• <u>meet once a week</u> <u>to discuss things</u> <u>pertaining to</u> <u>your work on this path.</u> <p><u>For,</u> <u>in many ways,</u> <u>it is very important</u> <u>not to do this work</u> <u>completely alone.</u></p> <p><u>In the first place,</u> <u>there is a spiritual law, my friends:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>to be able to open up,</u>• <u>to really open your heart</u> <u>to another person</u> <u>brings a spiritual help</u> <u>that you</u> <u>could not</u> <u>receive by yourself.</u> <p><u>It is</u> <u>the law of brotherhood.</u></p>

For people who are
always alone,
no matter
• how hard they work,
no matter
• how intelligently
they
• read or
• study,
no matter
• how much
self-honesty
they try to have,
become locked
in a certain vacuum
that bars
a complete
• understanding and
• evaluation
of the self,
an understanding
that automatically
flows into them
if they can
open themselves
to another soul.

By remaining
all alone,
you violate
the law of brotherhood
in some subtle way.

24

Not isolating yourself
requires
a certain amount of humility
which
does not come easily
at the very beginning,
but after some time
it becomes second nature
through a fruitful cooperation
with another person.

Soon you will be able to

- talk openly
about
your
 - difficulties,
- your
 - weaknesses and
- your
 - problems,

and

- receive criticism.

The latter [i.e., receiving criticism], of course,
is equally healthy
for the soul.

Each one of you

who has already tried
opening up

will confirm

that

merely discussing a problem
you have kept to yourself
without hearing good advice,

will cause it

to all of a sudden

lose

- its exaggerated proportions, and
- some of its fearful aspects.

By being yourself

- as you really are
with at least one person,
 - with the minimum of
 - masks and
 - defenses
- possible,

you imbibe

a very healthy medicine
for yourself.

At the same time

[by being yourself as you really are]

you offer

an act of love

to the other person

whom you help

more by

• *showing your own human weaknesses*

than by

• *trying to appear superior.*

Your

• *partner or*

• *co-worker*

will do the same

for you.

So

try to organize this

with each other.

You will see

after a while

how

• *helpful and*

• *fruitful*

this will be.

• *It will give you*

food for thought;

• *you will*

help each other and

• *you will*

learn a lot

in

• *brotherhood,*

in

• *humility, and*

in

• *detached understanding.*

25

Asking others
about your faults
may not always be possible
with the person
you have chosen
as your spiritual co-worker,
because
not all people
who come here
know each other very well.

Your own
• friends or
• family
may not
share your interest in this work,
but they still
• know you very well and
• can tell you
more about yourself
than your new-found friends here.

I would advise you
to ask those
who know you really well.

No matter
what they believe,
they will
respect you
• for your sincere endeavor
• to improve,
• to learn about your faults, and
• for listening to them.

You can ask
in the right way,
explaining to them
• that four eyes
often see more than two, and
• that you
• want to improve and
• will not be
• hurt or
• angry with them
even if
they say something
that may seem unjust to you.

My friends,
you know
it is possible
that by doing just that much,
you can open a door
to the very people
you
• had hoped to convince and
• were unable to reach
• by merely lecturing them,
• by trying to prove a truth
they could not see as yet.

26

When your
• friends or
• family
do tell you
your faults,
think about them
calmly.

Someone may say something
that at first
will seem
entirely
• unjust and
• hurtful
to you.

*You may also,
for that matter,
be even more hurt
if
a truth [concerning a real fault in you]
is told to you.*

*Even if you have
the sincere conviction
that the criticism
is an injustice,
try to
evaluate it [i.e., evaluate the criticism]
nonetheless.*

*There may be
only one grain of truth in it;
the other person may
• just see you
a little differently or
• see you just on
a superficial level.*

*He or she
may not have
the full understanding of
• what lies underneath,
• why
you react in this way, and
• all the complicated mechanisms
of the workings of the soul.*

*He or she
may not choose
the right words.*

*But
the one grain of truth
in what is said
may open
a new door of understanding
for you.*

It [i.e., the criticism or fault]
may not even be
something entirely new for you,
but it is often necessary
to consider
the same

- fault or
- trait
- from new angles,
- under a different light,

so as to understand
the various effects
this same fault
may have on
your surroundings.

When you

- say your daily prayer and
- do your meditation,

this [i.e., this set of faults that others may see in you]
is what you should
concentrate on.

27

Perhaps it is better for you
now
to devote less

- time and
- concentration

to
general deliberations,
and instead
ask God
for help
to be able to
recognize yourself

- in truth,
- without

the distorted view
the self
generally reserves
for itself.

Ask God
to inspire you
how to react rightly
to enlightenment about yourself;

ask for help
to receive
unpleasant truth from others
in a productive way.

If you start in this way,
you have made
a very good beginning.

If you take
all the faults
you are beginning to recognize
more and more clearly
into your daily meditation, and

if your wish [to know and react rightly to all your faults]
is truly sincere,
you have made
the best beginning imaginable.

28

And, my dear friends,
if you do that [i.e., if you recognize, know, and react rightly to all your faults],
train yourself
to observe
your inner reactions
when you deal with
the unpleasant
within you.

This is of
utmost importance.

*I have begun this lecture
by saying that
the lower self
constantly
resists your endeavors.*

*Here [i.e., as you observe your inner reactions when you deal with
the unpleasant within you]
you have a wonderful opportunity
to observe
your undisguised
lower self
as it*

- works and
- reacts.

*Try to watch it [i.e., Try to watch your undisguised lower self]
as you would a third person.*

*Try to be
a little less involved in it [i.e., less involved in your lower self].*

*Try to put
a little distance
between*

- your powers of
self-observation

and

- the reaction of
your
 - lower self,
- your
 - ego,
- your
 - hurt,
- your
 - vanity

*that become involved
when you are dealing with
the unpleasant side of your personality.*

By thus recognizing
your own reactions [i.e., reactions of your lower self, ego, hurt, and vanity when
you are dealing with your faults, the
unpleasant side of your personality]
and understanding them [i.e., understanding your own reactions
to your faults],
perhaps
• **humoring them** [i.e., humoring the reactions of your lower self
to your faults]
a little and
• **not taking yourself**
so deadly seriously
in this respect [i.e., in respect to your faults and
your reactions to them],
you will gain
another step up
on the ladder.

But I admonish you
not to expect this awareness [of your faults and of your reactions to them]
to happen
from one day
to the next.

It [i.e., to gain this awareness of your faults and of your reactions to them]
means
constant work,
and after some time of
regular work
each day,
let us say for only half an hour,
you will make progress.

*You will come to the point
when you
feel quite clearly
the distance
between*
• *the real you*
and
• *your hurt little ego,*
and you can humor it [i.e., humor your hurt little ego] a little bit
without being
so very much
in it [i.e., without being in your hurt little ego].

*Once you have accomplished this [i.e., accomplished putting distance between
the real you and your hurt little ego],*
the door will open
for further self-understanding.

29

*This [self-understanding, understanding of your various reactions to your faults
by working with a co-worker]*
might be
a very good way to begin [your work of discovering your faults],
dear friends.

Those of you
who have not found as yet
the right co-worker,
as we might call it,
can pray for
guidance
and you
will be helped.

	<p><u>Then</u> [i.e., <u>when you have found the right co-worker</u>]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>get together</u> <u>once a week and</u>• <u>tell each other</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>what</u> <u>you have accomplished so far,</u>• <u>where</u> <u>you still have difficulties,</u>• <u>what</u> <u>your inner reactions are,</u> <p><u>and perhaps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>plan together</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>what pertinent questions</u> <u>you may ask</u> <u>in the next general session here.</u> <p><u>This will also</u> <u>give great joy to you.</u></p>
30	<p><u>So, begin by</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>making your own</u> <u>inventory of faults.</u> <p><u>After you</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>have done</u> <u>your best in this respect, and</u>• <u>have also asked someone</u> <u>who knows you really well</u> <u>about your faults,</u> <p><u>compare</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>their observations</u> <p><u>with</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>your own findings.</u> <p><u>Complement</u> <u>the two lists,</u> <u>work with them.</u></p> <p><u>Take the results</u> <u>to God</u> <u>in your daily prayer</u> <u>to help you further.</u></p>

These efforts [i.e., efforts of making your own list of faults, talking to another about your faults, comparing the two lists and taking the results to God in your daily prayer]

are
a wonderful beginning
for everyone.

They [i.e., these efforts]
will not be in vain,
I promise you.

If
every day
you

- *do some*
self-observation work, and
- *meditate on*
some of the pertinent words
I am giving here,

you will certainly
be successful,
long before
actual results
can manifest in your life.

A feeling of
deep

- *contentment and*
- *peace*
will come to you
often,
[a feeling of deep contentment and peace]
that only those
who work on themselves
according to God's will
can have.

On a day when you
feel
• strong,
• alive and
• full of enthusiasm,

it is
much easier
to find contact with
• God and
• His truth
within yourself.

Consider such days
a source of strength
that you can gather
for the more difficult times
that may follow.

Most important, however,
are the days
when you
feel
• low and
• discouraged and
• doubtful.

Then [i.e., when you feel low, discouraged, and doubtful]
it becomes
imperative
for you to know
how to fight
against
giving in
to these moods.

Choose these [low] days
to
• reread
what I am saying here and
• consider it [i.e., consider what I am saying here] again, and
• take your problem to God.

It is
most difficult
for human beings
to form
• the right thoughts
at
• the right moment.

The practice of this
is a training
in itself.

To have
• the proper thoughts
at
• the proper time
is really nothing else
but
a habit
that has to be formed.

So
if you are
• low and
• discouraged,
do not
give in
to your mood
so easily.

[Rather,]
Ask God for
• proper understanding and
• light
in this moment [when you are feeling low and discouraged].

Perhaps you could
make a mark
on your copy of the lecture
and put it in a certain place
where you can easily find it.

Then,
if you still doubt [my words here],
ask God for

- His truth and
- His will
for you;

ask Christ
to help you
to be receptive to it [i.e., receptive to God's truth and God's will for you].

Pray:
"Father,

- is this
thy truth?
- Is this
thy will for me?

I am open
to receive
thy answer."

Nothing more
is asked
when you are
in doubt,
my friends.

But
if you

- do this
 - sincerely,
 - with your
whole heart, and
- disregard
the resistance
of your lower self
that
always
lurks nearby
in such moments,

then
you will have gained
a major victory.

I want to impress this [work of discovering and dealing with your faults]
upon you;
take it with you tonight
as the first

- *actual and*
- *concrete*

beginning on this path.

31

Before turning to your questions now,
I want to mention once more that
everything
you suffer from
in your life,
my friends,
results

- *directly or*
- *indirectly*

from your

- *shortcomings and*

from your

- *fears.*

If you did not have
any shortcomings,
there could not be
any fear
in you.

It is

- *fear*
that makes you
so miserable,
- *the same fear*
that makes you
blind to
the joys of life.

Remember that
it is in
your own power
to break
the chains of fear
by following this path.

It is in
your own hands.

If
you wish for
this power [to break the chains of fear],
you will
receive it.

No matter
how busy you are in your life,
you will
have the time,
not only

- to fulfill your duties
as you have done before,

but

- to fulfill them
infinitely better.

And
you will have time
to enjoy life
infinitely better too
when
you lose
the constant

- fear and
- insecurity

in your soul.

It [i.e., the fear and insecurity in your soul]
spoils
everything
for you
so much,
my dear ones.

Do not think
you will lack the strength
for the necessary work on this path.

This strength
will be given
drop by drop
for all your needs,
• spiritual and
• material,
when you
first decide
to
• choose this path and
• trust God
that He will
give you
what you need for it.

And now, my friends,
I am ready for your questions.

32

QUESTION:
Would you please tell us
what Jesus meant by
"the meek
shall inherit the earth?"

ANSWER:
By
"meek"
are meant
all who have
no
hatred,
no
resentment,
no
self-will, and
no
fear.

They [i.e., those who have no hatred, resentment, self-will, and fear]
will be able
to be

- understanding,
 - loving, and
 - humble
- enough

not to have to
prove themselves
right
all the time.

Many people
may lack the courage
to put this [understanding, loving, and humble living] in practice,

but
inside
they feel frustrated
when they are
not
able to do it [i.e., when they are not able to practice
understanding, loving, and humble living].

To be like this [i.e., to be understanding, loving, and humble]
is to have

a very healthy soul,

because
this means

- having
- strength,
 - power, and
 - independence.

Such a person
lives

- with
the divine law
that works for him or her,

instead of

- swimming against
the stream of the law
which then sets up
very disharmonious currents.

33

On the other hand,
it should be clearly understood
that
meekness
in the way Jesus meant it
does
not
mean
that you should
let the lower self
of your brother
triumph [over you].

Oh no.

Jesus Christ himself
has not done so [i.e., has not let the lower self of another triumph over him].

Jesus Christ
has fought many a time,
and often
quite strongly.

To fight evil
• in the other fellow,
as well as
• in yourself,
also includes
being able to
accept a hurt,
and perhaps
learn from it.

But
you must
not allow
the lower nature
of others
to take advantage
of your meekness.

34

Finding
the right course
between
these
apparently contradictory
courses of action
is not as difficult
as it may appear at first.

Test yourself
first
where

- your own ego
is involved,
- your pride perhaps or
- your self-will;

right then and there
you should learn
to accept humbly
that
your ego
prevents
your seeing
the truth.

The fighting spirit
that then arises

- should be curbed

and only

- allowed to function

if
the ego [with its pride or self-will perhaps]
can be neutralized.

After a while,
with proper
self-development,

- objectivity and
- impartial judgment

are attained.

If

- you can
clearly feel
how your ego
is gradually disappearing, and
- you are
not in the center
of your own universe
anymore,

you will be able to

- stand up
for a right principle and
- know how to fight
in the right way.

Of course,

this cannot happen
as long as
you allow
anything that touches you personally
to influence
your course of action.

When

your small ego
stands in the center,
your judgment
is always
colored.

Until

you can clearly distinguish
if your ego is

- still involved and
- to what extent,

you will have to
accomplish some work
on this path.

For quite a time
you will find
that
• your reactions,
• your feelings and
• your views,
even on quite general subjects,
are at times
colored
by your own personal ego-stake.

Not
to have this ego
in the foreground any more
is
to have the humility
we are always talking about.

This is
the meekness
Jesus mentioned.

This humility
alone
will
• make you
really strong and
• give you
the power
to distinguish
• when to
• keep still
after a personal
• hurt or
• injustice and
• quietly forgive, and
• when to
• stand up and
• fight against
something evil,
whether or not
it touches your life.

To come that far,
• you have to be
a keen detective of
• your most hidden feelings and
• their true nature;
• you have to
train yourself
to acquire
the strictest possible
self-observation.

35

QUESTION:
How do
the different main religions
continue their activities
in the spiritual world?

Do they fight each other?

And how far
can they influence
human beings?

ANSWER:
In all the spheres,
and
in every gradation within them [i.e., within the spheres]
from
• the highest
to
• the lowest,
the different main religions
are represented.

It is self-explanatory that
they [i.e., the main religions]
work differently
in each sphere,
according to
the height
of their development.

Let us begin with
the highest spheres.

There [i.e., in the highest spheres],
the different religious denominations
also have
their own organization,
but
in a very different way
from what is often imagined
by human beings.

Those [spirits]
in the highest sphere
know the

- real truth

of the unity of all,
as well as the

- falsehoods and
- truths

of both

- their own religious groups

and

- the others.

They [i.e., spirits of the highest spheres]
continue to work
for the Plan of Salvation
within their own group
because
they have their tasks to fulfill.

If spirits of the highest spheres
did not also
come to earth
within
the different religious organizations
via certain people
of a particular church,
the Plan of Salvation
could not function

- properly or
- efficiently.

36

By the same token,
very high spirits
also
• work and
• inspire
• groups,
• nations, and
• individuals
who are not bound
to any religion.

There is
so much
to be fulfilled
in this great plan
that often has to be done
• through and
• around
existing
• conditions and
• blindnesses.

Without such incarnations
in different
• churches and
• groups
it would be
impossible
to tear down falsehoods.

Truth
has to grow
slowly.

Any religion on earth, therefore,
will have
emissaries
born into it
from
all spheres
who belong to
this particular denomination.

	<p><u>They</u> [i.e., <u>the emissaries who are sent</u>] <u>are ranged according to</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>the development and</u>• <u>the desire</u> <u>of the individual in question</u> [i.e., <u>according to the development and desire of the individual who is to be inspired by the emissaries</u>], <u>and also according to</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>their</u> [i.e., <u>the individual's</u>] <u>openness to truth.</u> <p><u>Thus,</u> <u>the measure of inspiration</u> [accomplished in a person] <u>always</u> <u>depends on the person</u> [who is being inspired].</p>
37	<p><u>You are</u> <u>always</u> <u>inspired</u> <u>according to</u> <u>your</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>aims and</u>• <u>attitudes.</u> <p><u>In the highest spheres</u> <u>the spirits</u> <u>plan</u> <u>with a long view,</u> <u>knowing that</u> <u>their inspiration</u> [i.e., <u>the inspiration the spirits offer to human beings</u>] <u>has an ultimate purpose</u> <u>that can rarely be understood</u> <u>by human beings.</u></p>

The spirits
cannot overcome
the human dogmas;

unless those people
heard the truth
from highly developed incarnated spirits
of their own religion,
they would not be open
for any inspiration,
because
their minds
are too strongly set.

Whenever this is the case [i.e., whenever people's minds are too strongly set
in their own beliefs or in their religion's dogma],
the doors are closed to
inspiration
coming from the spirit world.

Nevertheless,
enough sincere good will
may be present
to enable
the spirit world
to do good.

God's spirit world
needs workers

- in all groups,
- in all religions,

to attain
the one great aim
of
final unity.

We [in the spirit world] know
that this unity
cannot be accomplished as yet,
but we work
best for this goal
• not by
trying to destroy,
• but by
building upon
that which counts.

In God's world, therefore,
the different religions
certainly do not fight.

They all
have the same goal.

They know
the limitations
of spirits of lower development, and
they try to
slowly
eliminate
these limitations
by building upon
what is constructive.

38

However,
in the spheres that
do not
belong to the world of God
as yet,
conditions
are different.

There [in the spheres that do not as yet belong to the world of God]
the various religions
do not fight either,
because
they do not have an opportunity to do so
for the most part.

	<p><i><u>There may be an exception</u></i> <i><u>in an individual case</u></i> <i><u>that is too complicated to explain here,</u></i> <i><u>but</u></i> <i><u>as groups</u></i> <i><u>they [i.e., the various religions]</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>have their own spheres and</u></i>• <i><u>remain there.</u></i>
39	<p><i><u>I have often told you</u></i> <i><u>that in the spirit world</u></i> <i><u>you live among spirits</u></i> <i><u>of your own kind.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>That</u></i> <i><u>diminishes</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>friction,</u></i> <p><i><u>but also</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>the possibility to advance.</u></i> <p><i><u>Let us take the case</u></i> <i><u>of human beings</u></i> <i><u>who have</u></i> <i><u>fervently</u></i> <i><u>believed in one particular religion.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>In many ways</u></i> <i><u>they</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>are still imperfect</u></i> <p><i><u>and therefore</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>cannot reach higher spheres</u></i> <i><u>after shedding their bodies.</u></i>

When they enter
the spirit world
they will
always
be surrounded by
spirits,
both

- higher

and

- lower,

who

- are compatible with them

and therefore

- belong to this religious group.

The higher spirits
may be trying to give certain

- advice or
- hints

about

- personal errors,

as well as about

- the errors of their convictions.

But
if these happen to be

- stubborn people,
- very much

indoctrinated with
their own beliefs,

they

- will not be open
for such words and
- will reject
all
 - advice and
 - hintsas untrue.

Since
free will
is never violated,
these people
are free
to go with
those spirits
who have
not changed
their own beliefs.

They would do so [i.e. They would go with those spirits
who have not changed their own beliefs]
even less

- in the spirit world

than

- on earth;

in the latter case [i.e., on earth]
they at least
had the

- knowledge and
- opportunity
 - of seeing
other means of reaching God and
 - of learning something from that.

But
in the beyond
they live
in their own world,
and it
may take a
very,
very
long time
to change their views,
particularly if,
due to their personal convictions,
they are incarnated again
into the same surroundings.

Some spirits in these spheres
may be a little disappointed
that their world
is not more beautiful;

but then
they may also realize,
and rightly so,
that this is due to

- their own imperfection
- and has nothing to do with
- their religious belief.

Only at
a later state of purification
does it occur to them
that

- stubbornness and
- narrow-mindedness

are at the core
of their lower self,
and these traits [i.e., their lower self stubbornness and narrow-mindedness],
among other things,
were responsible for
their one-sidedness.

As long as
this stubbornness
exists,
no one of you
can receive inspiration
for something that
may be contradictory
to your own stubborn convictions,
unless it is through
an act of God's grace
that may only come
in rare instances.

Such grace
has to be
earned
in other ways.

41

*As I have often said,
it is possible
for a
• person or
• spirit
to develop
in every religion.*

*Only if
a certain point of development is reached,
will the realization dawn
that
all truth
meets
finally
in one universal form.*

*When you have reached this awareness,
you will see that
• there is
no division
among religions;
• there is
no longer
any attitude
of
"only
this way
is right
and all others
are wrong."*

*You will then see
the many errors
of particular religions,
and
still
work with
the truth.*

42

QUESTION:
What happens after death
to a person who was
an atheist,
for instance?

ANSWER:
There are
spheres
for every possibility.

You know very well
that the issue
is not so much
• what religion you believe in,
but
• whether or not
you fulfill the best
that can be expected of you
in your incarnation.

If people are
atheists,
they will be judged
according to
their accomplishments;

the same applies
to everyone,
of course.

These accomplishments
are measured
individually
according to
one's previous
• incarnations,
• merits,
• omissions,
and so forth.

People

may have been atheists
and still have accomplished something;

perhaps they have
overcome

- a particular weakness or
- a hatred against
someone sharing their last incarnation
and this counts in their favor.

So those people
will be in the sphere

- that belongs to them,
- that they have built
with their
 - feelings,with their
 - thoughts, andwith their
 - general and
 - particular
attitudes.

You tend to forget, my friends,
that

- the spheres are
not
out there and
- you are
not
put into them.

The spheres
are your own creations.

You build them,
and whatever you have built
is

- your sphere,
- your temporary home.

43

QUESTION:

I always thought
that atheists
remained in darkness
because
they are
separated
from divine light?

ANSWER:

Yes, this is so
in most cases.

But here too,
one cannot generalize.

There may be an instance
where
an atheist
is not
in darkness.

He or she
will certainly
not
be able to live
in a sphere of

- bliss,
- beauty, and
- divine harmony,

but they
do not
have to live
in dire misery
either.

It depends on
so many considerations, my friends,
for

- the judgment or
- the evaluation

of a particular case
is entirely relative.

Beings who are
still very undeveloped
have much less
expected of them.

Let us take for example
souls

- who are
still very young,
- who have
only had
a few incarnations.

Their instincts
are still

- low and
- coarse.

Now such people
may be tempted
to give in to these instincts
and perhaps
kill someone.

If this temptation
can be overcome,
even though
such people

- do not believe in God,
- but have merely some sense of decency,

their souls
will have earned
great merit.

This
may be

- more in their favor and

may be

- of infinitely greater merit
than what people
of higher development
acquire.

44

What counts
is the effort
to overcome
one's lower self.

Whether
the lower self
still contains
such dark trends
in a younger spirit,

or whether
the lower self
simply contains
the

- faults,
- weaknesses, and
- sick currents

that any of you possess,

is
immaterial.

The
effort
counts.

Therefore,
atheistic souls
such as the ones I mentioned here
will have

- some light
in their sphere,
- some bright spot
that signifies
 - hope
 - encouragement or
 - a certain strengththat will flow
into them
in their next incarnation.

*In the spirit world
evaluation
is never
general.*

*It is
always
strictly personal,
and
judgment
is passed
on all personal considerations.*

*Everything
is taken into account,
and therefore
judgment
is always
completely fair.*

*For human beings
this [i.e., judgment being personal and where everything is taken
into consideration]
is hard to imagine,
since you tend
so very much
to*

- oversimplify and*
- generalize.*

45

Now I

- will retire
into my world and*
- will leave you
with God's
warm blessings
for each one of you.*

*Next week
you celebrate Easter [Note: Easter was April 6 in 1958, this lecture was given
on Friday March 28, 1958, the Friday before Holy Week].*

It [i.e., Holy Week]
marks the time of
the greatest sacrifice
that has been made,
my dear ones.

Think of this sacrifice these days
with particular gratefulness.

It [i.e., this sacrifice]
was done
for each and every one of you
without exception.

Take the strength with you
that was given to you this evening.

- **May it**
fortify you, and
- **may it**
fill you
with
 - **love and**
 - **courage.**

Go your way
in peace;

be in God!

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