

Pathwork Lecture 88: Religion: True and False

1996 Edition, Given September 15, 1961

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><i>Greetings, my dearest friends.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Blessings for all of you.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Throughout the ages</i></u> <u><i>divine effort</i></u> <u><i>was focused on</i></u> <u><i>conveying</i></u> <u><i>true religion</i></u> <u><i>to humankind.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>That endeavor, however,</i></u> <u><i>was accompanied by</i></u> <u><i>an unavoidable reaction,</i></u> <u><i>not so much of</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• anti-religion,</i><u><i>as you may believe,</i></u> <u><i>but of</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• false religion.</i></p> <p><u><i>This distortion is promoted by</i></u> <u><i>giving to falsehood</i></u> <u><i>the appearance of truth.</i></u></p>

Original Lecture Text by Eva Broch Pierrakos

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Edited by Judith and John Saly; Devotional Version Revised 4/18/14; 3/5/16

If you follow
the history of religion,
you will be able to determine an
obvious
though gradual
trend
with many a relapse,
leading from the
• false
toward the
• true
religion.

Particularly in recent times,
despite,
or maybe
because of
all the
• upheaval and
• confusion,
the trend
is stronger than ever
toward
true religion.

04

What are the main differences
between
• true
and
• false
religion?

One of the main determinants
is that in
false religion
obedience to authority
is one of the great strongholds.

In all religions
-- in some more, and in others less --
the concept of
obedience
plays an important role.

True religion
does not
obey.

It [i.e., true religion]
is free.

True religion
is a willing process:

a
• free,
• self-determined
action,
derived from
understanding.

It [i.e., true religion]
makes people act
from
• their own conviction

and never from
• fear,
nor from
• the desire to
• please and
• appease
a more powerful
• person,
• being, or
• authority.

05

Obedience to authority
has been encouraged by
exponents of religion
under
• the half-true and
• only partly valid
argument
that humanity
was too much enslaved
by its passions
to be let free.

	<p><u>Therefore</u> <u>obedience had to be stressed</u> <u>in order to</u> <u>protect society.</u></p>
06	<p><u>Superficially</u> <u>this [i.e., this stressing of obedience to authority in order to protect society]</u> <u>may seem right;</u> <u>in reality</u> <u>it is not.</u></p> <p><u>For although it is true</u> <u>that the overall</u> <u>development of humanity</u> <u>is not advanced enough</u> <u>to be free of</u> <u>destructive impulses,</u> <u>the laws</u> <u>to prevent</u> <u>such destruction</u> <u>need not be combined with</u> <u>religion.</u></p> <p><u>In other words,</u> <u>religion</u> <u>would not have to convey</u> <u>the idea of</u> <u>a stern God-authority</u> <u>in order to prevent crime.</u></p> <p><u>There are</u> <u>other means</u> <u>to effect that [i.e., other means to prevent crime]</u> <u>through</u> <u>civil law [rather than prevent crime through religious law].</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Religion</u> <u>need not be distorted and</u>• <u>truth</u> <u>obscured</u> <u>by encouraging humanity's</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>weakest,</u>• <u>sickest, and</u>• <u>most immature</u> <u>tendencies.</u>

It is those [i.e., those weakest, sickest, and most immature] tendencies that are exploited in order to maintain false religion.

07

You know by now, because of your work on this path, that one of your great struggles is overcoming the unconscious desire

- *to remain a clinging, protected child,*
- *to refuse the apparent hardship of adulthood, self-responsibility, and independence.*

To the child in you it seems much better

- *to remain helpless,*
- *to force the powerful adult world, or God, or any substitute for these two, to take on the responsibility for your life that you yourself should carry.*

The tremendously damaging effects that this hidden attitude has on the personality can be discovered only when it [i.e., only when this attitude to remain helpless and to force God or another authority to take on the responsibility for your life] becomes conscious.

But unconsciously
you battle
against this very awareness, [i.e., against the awareness of this attitude in
you to remain helpless and to force God or another
authority to take on the responsibility for your life]

wishfully thinking
in your unconscious

that

- **the disadvantages of**
- **adulthood**
can be avoided

by remaining a child,

[a child] who at the same time

refuses to face

- **the tragic disadvantages of**
- **prolonged childhood.**

This soul-crippling attitude [i.e., this attitude in you to remain a helpless child
and to force God or another authority to take on
the responsibility for your life]

finally succeeds in
really making you helpless,
while the god-authority
you desire to

take over your responsibility [for your life]

is just not there [i.e., this god-authority is your god-image in your mind
and is not there in reality as a god-authority].

This [i.e., unconsciously, this god-authority, being a god-image in your mind, and
not being a god-in-fact and therefore not able to
take responsibility for your life],

in turn,

causes

- **bitterness,**
- **rebellion, and**
- **a deep feeling of injustice.**

You feel cheated.

After all,

you have

obeyed [this god-image in your mind],
often to the letter.

But,
obedience of this sort
always
has the wrong motive:

"If I obey,
• you will protect me.
• You will make decisions for me.
• I will not be held responsible and
• I will be rewarded
with happiness
for being
an obedient little child."

Since God
does not [in fact]
"reward"
such unhealthy attitudes,
you
must
feel cheated.

[Therefore, holding on to this "reward-for-obedience" god-image]
You cannot help
but feel
injustice in the world.

08

False religion
has
• encouraged and
• capitalized on
this very sick tendency [in the child-self].

It [i.e., false religion]

- has set up
rules [to obey] and
dogmas [to believe], and
- has
distorted the law
into such
a rigid concept

that humans

fell easily

into this

- submissive and
- dependent
attitude.

False religion

encouraged

- fear,
- dependency,
- helplessness, and
- a humiliating,
though often very subtle,
tendency
to appease.

This

has the

additional crippling effect

of causing

- self-contempt [self-contempt for not being good enough
to appease “god”]

and

- shame [shame for not being good enough to appease “god”],

which in turn

often

has to find outlets

that become destructive

toward

- others,
- as well as
- the self.

Rebellion

must follow

this set of emotions.

09

Whenever

- fear,
- timidity,
- nonassertion,
- appeasement, and
- obedience

predominate

in a personality,

rebellion

must exist also.

It [i.e., rebellion]

may not be

on the surface,

but

it [i.e., rebellion]

must exist!

There can be no doubt about it.

It will be

quite a battle

to find

this level

of

- rebellion,
- bitterness,
- hostility, and
- aggression.

This battle

is caused by

resistance

to giving up

the cherished

self-image

of the

"good" person.

The need for
such "goodness"
mostly stems from
the hidden striving to
remain
a helpless child
in order to
make

- the grown-up world -- or
- God, or
- life, or
- human authority –
see the necessity [and "duty" in response to
the child's faithful obedience]

of
taking care of
the child.

And the child
[believes that it] only
"deserves" [as a "reward" for "goodness"]
such benign care
if it maintains
its ["perfect"] "goodness."

10

By the same token,
if [on the other hand]
you encounter
in a human being

- overemphasis on independence,
- hostile domineering tendencies,
- toughness, and
- denial of all
 - laws and
 - rules,

you may be certain
that

- fear,
- cringing appeasement, and
- helplessness
also exist,
though hidden
from awareness.

The shame
surrounding
these [unconscious] tendencies
[to fear, appease, and feel helpless]
is so great
that
the outer personality
takes on
a false
• freedom and
• independence
in a poor imitation
of
the real qualities [of freedom and
independence].

Because
such people
wish so strongly
to avoid
the struggle of life,
they cringe
like the predominantly
• fearful and
• appeasing
type,
but are ashamed of
• this weakness,
as well as of
• the disappointment of
not getting their way.

Unconsciously,
they feel
• alone.

They feel
• rejected
• by God,
• by life,
• by human authority,

and
this shame [of feeling alone and rejected by God, life, and human authority]
must be hidden
at all costs.

11

Both

crude types [i.e., both the fearful, appeasing, and obedient type as well as the type pretending to be free and independent from any authority]

-- **often appearing in**
more subtle

- **mixtures and**
- **combinations** –

represent, of course,
psychological deviations
that can always be traced to

- **parental influences and**
- **early experiences.**

It is also important

to consider these [distorted psychological]
manifestations

from the

- **spiritual and**
- **religious**

point of view, however.

Complete

- **awareness and**
- **understanding**

of these [heretofore mostly unconscious inner]

attitudes [i.e., the inner attitudes of both the fearful, appeasing, and obedient personality as well as the inner attitudes of the personality pretending to be free and independent from any authority]

will show you

how you

inwardly

deviate from

your [outward] **conscious beliefs.**

12

So where there is

outer

- religious faith,
- obedience, and
- appeasement,

try to find

not only

- the clinging helplessness,

but also

- the hidden resentment
that

God has not

come forth to

provide you with

what you

- need and
- want, [i.e., that God has not fulfilled His "duty"
in response to your outer conscious religious
faith, obedience, and appeasement, namely]
- to lead you by the hand,
- to make life right for you,
- to eliminate
from this earth [once and for all]
 - cruelty and
 - injustice,
 - suffering and
 - pain.

Such

general complaints

are

often motivated by

the inner subjective disappointment

of not being "taken care of" [by God, by those in authority].

	<p><u>When [on the other hand]</u> <u>you find</u> <u>manifest</u> • <u>rebellion and</u> • <u>aggressiveness,</u> • <u>a drive for overindependence,</u> <u>try to find</u> <u>deep down in you</u> • <u>a wish for</u> <u>the strong hand</u> <u>of authority</u> <u>that is utterly good to you,</u> <u>and</u> • <u>your disappointment</u> <u>that</u> <u>you could not find it [i.e., could not find such an authority].</u></p>
13	<p><u>It will be</u> <u>a part of your task</u> <u>in [the psychological work of] self-search</u> <u>to ascertain</u> <u>where</u> • <u>false religion</u> <u>exists deep in your soul;</u> <u>where</u> • <u>you borrow, as it were,</u> <u>religious precepts</u> <u>behind which</u> <u>you</u> • <u>hide and</u> • <u>excuse</u> <u>your childish tendencies</u> <u>to refuse to</u> <u>grow up.</u></p>
14	<p><u>Your</u> • <u>conscious</u> • <u>right opinions</u> <u>are worth very little</u> <u>when they are undermined by your</u> • <u>unconscious</u> • <u>beliefs.</u></p>

If you
do not
• live,
• experience, and
• feel
these right ideas,
they [i.e., these conscious right opinions and beliefs]
become
powerless.

They [i.e., these conscious right opinions and beliefs]
are
empty.

Only when
beliefs
are
• incorporated at
the emotional level,
• integrated in
the whole character structure,
will they
have power.

Whenever
you wonder
why things happen to you
that run counter to
• your [conscious] beliefs and
• the spiritual laws [of the Cosmos, laws that]
you [consciously] know so well,

you can be sure that,
at least in some respect,
you [unconsciously] deviate
inwardly [from spiritual law].

It will be your task [as you do your work]
to find
• how and
• how much
you
unconsciously
deviate from
your correct conscious opinions [and beliefs].

	<p><i><u>While you may know perfectly well [intellectually and consciously]</u></i> <i><u>that</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>God is</u></i> <i><u>neither a</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>benign [i.e., gracious and rewarding]</u></i>• <i><u>nor a</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>hostile [i.e., angry and punishing]</u></i> <p><i><u>authority,</u></i></p> <p><i><u>that</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>God has</u></i> <i><u>freed us and</u></i>• <i><u>it is</u></i> <i><u>up to us</u></i> <i><u>to develop [into healthy psychological and spiritual adulthood],</u></i> <p><i><u>you may often find [to your amazement]</u></i></p> <p><i><u>that</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>your emotions</u></i> <i><u>completely deviate</u></i> <i><u>from such [conscious intellectual] knowledge.</u></i>
15	<p><i><u>Problems</u></i> <i><u>you carry</u></i> <i><u>through</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>many incarnations and</u></i> <p><i><u>through</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>your childhood</u></i> <p><i><u>are instrumental</u></i> <i><u>in bringing these</u></i> <i><u>unconscious</u></i> <i><u>conflicts [i.e., conflicts between your outer conscious beliefs about God</u></i> <i><u>and your inner unconscious emotions of fear of and</u></i> <i><u>disappointments in God]</u></i></p> <p><i><u>to the surface.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>But so does</u></i> <i><u>the tendency of</u></i> <i><u>religion to</u></i> <i><u>encourage</u></i> <i><u>blind obedience [i.e., religion encourages blind obedience to</u></i> <i><u>a god authority, reinforcing your unconscious god-image</u></i> <i><u>of a god who rewards the good and punishes the bad].</u></i></p>

Both causes [i.e., both the cause of problems in previous incarnations and childhood as well as the cause of false religion's encouraging blind obedience]
produce personalities

distorted by

- **helplessness,**
- **false goodness, and**
- **appeasement;**

or [by]

- **overindependence,**
- **rebellion, and**
- **false toughness;**

or [most often by]

- **a combination of both.**

In both instances [i.e., In both helplessness, false goodness, and appeasement of authority on the one hand, as well as, on the other hand, in overindependence from authority, rebellion against authority or false toughness]

you

- **hide something and**
- **ardently try to prove**
to

- **yourself and**
- **others**
that

the hidden
does not exist.

In one case

you hide the

- **rebellion and**
- **hostility;**

in the other,

you hide the

- **helplessness and**
- **desire for protection,**
- **the tendency to**
 - **appease and**
 - **be falsely "good."**

16	<p><u>By</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>finding,</u>• <u>tracing,</u>• <u>understanding, and</u>• <u>resolving</u> <p><u>these distortions,</u></p> <p><u>you</u></p> <p><u>not only [individually]</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>grow up and [thereby]</u>• <u>become a</u>• <u>stronger and</u>• <u>happier</u> <p><u>human being,</u></p> <p><u>you</u></p> <p><u>also [on a broader religious and cultural level]</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>contribute much more</u> <p><u>than you can possibly perceive at the moment</u></p> <p><u>toward</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>the elimination of</u>• <u>false religion and</u>• <u>its [the false religion's] substitution by</u>• <u>real religion</u> <p><u>in the world at large.</u></p>
17	<p><u>Obedience,</u></p> <p><u>as false religion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>encourages and</u>• <u>teaches</u> <p><u>it [i.e., as false religion teaches obedience],</u></p> <p><u>is completely incompatible with</u></p> <p><u>the idea that</u></p> <p><u>a free human being</u></p> <p><u>can attain</u></p> <p><u>divinity.</u></p>

Once
blind obedience
is eliminated
from
• religion and
from
• the soul
of the individual,
rebellion
against
what is truly
• good,
• wise, and
• loving
in religion
will cease

because
religion
will lose
that tinge of
• hypocrisy and
• sanctimoniousness
that it so often has
for a number of individuals.

• True religion, [which is always one and the same as]
• genuine spirituality,
aims primarily
to make you
• free,
to make you
• strong,
to make you
• responsible

so that
you
do not
wait for
justice
to be dished out to you [by God or other outside authority],
but [rather]
discover
your own justice [i.e., justice as the natural consequences
and effects of your own causes].

With the wrong attitude [toward God],
you not only
• fail to eliminate
your self-imposed helplessness,
you [even]
• encourage
it [i.e., you even encourage your self-imposed helplessness],
as well as
• encouraging
false religion,
even if
• the weakness and
• clinging to authority
happens to take
a consciously secular form.

Thus you must see
that such
• immaturity and
• soul deviations
play hand in hand with
• false authoritarian religion.

Anything
false [e.g., here false authoritarian religion]
always brings
an equally false
countermeasure [e.g., immaturity, rebellion, weakness, soul deviations].

18

So,
find
in what
• subtle,
• deeply hidden
recesses
of your soul
you expect
God
• to live for you;
• to make decisions for you;
• to bring desired results for you;
• to give you
what you could get for yourself
if only you decided to become
• free and
• mature.

Find in yourself
this element
that is
more harmful
than you now can realize.

You
cripple yourself
with this hidden attitude [i.e., this attitude that God takes care of you].

And you make
a false crutch [i.e., you use the authority of false religion as a crutch]
out of the truth [rather than use the truth directly for what it is intended].

19

• False religion
does more harm to
true religion
than complete
• atheism and
• materialism
[do harm to true religion]

because it [i.e., because false religion]
makes a farce
• of truth,
• of the dignity
of the
• freedom and
• divine strength
in humanity.

It [i.e., false religion]
puts a
powerful argument
into the mouths of
the anti-religionists.

So it becomes
very important that
you find
where
you continue to cling [to authority as prescribed in false religion]
because
you are afraid of standing on your own two feet.

You may at first wonder
how to go about
finding this element [where you cling to or rebel against authority
espoused by false religion]
in yourself.

I say
it does not matter
where you begin
if you focus
on this goal [i.e., the goal of finding where you cling to or rebel against the
authority espoused by false religion].

Take
any negative emotion:
• envy,
• bitterness,
• fear,
• helplessness –
and most indicative of all,
• self-pity.

Once you ascertain these [negative] feelings,
it will not be so difficult
to find
where you cling to
• spiritual and
• emotional [or psychological]
infancy.

Search in this direction [i.e., search negative emotions and see where you
cling to spiritual and emotional infancy]
even if
you believe this doesn't apply to you.

If you really
want
to find the truth
you will.

You always have [found the truth when you truly wanted to].

Once you have found
this unconscious
insistence on
remaining
a helpless child [*totally depending upon God or other authority*
to protect you from all evil and give you all good],
you will soon
come to see
that it [*i.e., that this insistence on remaining a helpless child and*
refusing to grow up into spiritual adulthood]
is responsible for
your

- weakness,

your

- helplessness,

your

- enduring fear of life.

But [*instead*]
you [*unconsciously*]
combat this discovery [*i.e., the discovery that you do not want to grow up*
into spiritual adulthood but rather want to remain a child]
by making yourself
even

- more helpless,
- more fearful, and
- weaker

[thus setting in motion an ever-building vicious circle].

Once you
truly

- see and
- understand

this [*i.e., see that you do not want to grow up but rather remain a child*],
you will begin
to change –
and your [*inner*] strength [*in spiritual adulthood*]
will grow.

You will
no longer
hope
for God
to give you
what you

- should and
- could

be strong enough
to obtain
for yourself.

And this [*experience of obtaining what you want by your own strength*]
will give you

- self-respect and
- security.

While you [*still are unwilling to do for yourself what you want and instead*]
cling to
a stronger [*external*] authority
than yourself
in order to avoid

- effort and
- responsibility [*i.e. to avoid the effort and responsibility*
that it takes to be your own authority],

you cannot help
feeling

- self-hate and
- self-contempt,

[for not taking self-responsibility and making the effort to live your life]

and you
become

- weaker and
- more helpless

[and thus the vicious circle builds]

20	<p><u>Such a</u> <u>[clinging, submissive, and appeasing] relation</u> <u>to authority</u> <u>can take</u> <u>the form of</u> <u>a vague sense that</u> <u>the world at large</u> <u>must be appeased.</u></p> <p><u>This [vague sense of needing to appease, submit or cling]</u> <u>can be felt also</u> <u>toward</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>certain people,</u> <p><u>or it</u> <u>can actually be [felt]</u> <u>[toward]</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>your concept of God,</u> <u>which then leads to</u> <u>the God-image</u> <u>I have discussed before.</u> [See Pathwork <u>Lecture #52, The God Image]</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>False religion and</u>• <u>your unconscious insistence</u> <u>on remaining an infant</u> <p><u>combine</u> <u>to produce this</u> <u>God-image.</u></p>
21	<p><u>In the transitional state</u> <u>between</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>giving up false religion</u> <p><u>and</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>embracing true religion,</u> <p><u>there comes a phase of</u> <u>nothingness.</u></p> <p><u>It [i.e., this in-between phase of nothingness between false and true religion]</u> <u>is a difficult phase</u> <u>indeed.</u></p>

It [i.e., this in-between phase of nothingness between false and true religion]
is a phase in which
you feel alone
because

• **the false god [i.e., the god-image of your false childish religion]**
is dissolving

and

• **the true God [of your adult's emerging true religion]**
can not yet take hold of your being.

In this [in-between] phase
all your faith may begin to crumble.

You may be full of doubts
about the very existence of God.

This [sense of a crumbling faith and doubt about the existence of God]
is the consequence of
eliminating

• **the false security,**

• **the escape,**

• **the crutch**

that are part of
spiritual infancy.

Since
the god of your childish concept
indeed does not exist [i.e., the god of your childhood does not exist in fact,
but is merely the child's image of god],

God Himself
appears
temporarily
not to exist at all.

22

But as

- the false religion and
- its God-image

vanish,

even while you

feel

temporarily alone,

an inner force

begins to grow

in you,

long before

you become aware of it –

provided, of course,

you

- are not thrown by
this temporary state [i.e., the state where you
sense God does not exist],
- but continue to [do your
psychological and spiritual] work.

You need to be willing [to continue to work and]

to take it upon yourself [i.e., take it upon yourself seemingly

without the help of God]

to become

- whole,
- strong, and
- self-reliant.

You have to

determine

not to allow

this temporary state [i.e., the state in which you feel God does

not exist and hence life is meaningless]

to crush you

into abdicating

- life and
- struggle.

If you

fall into such a state [i.e., the state of being crushed and defeated by

the illusion that God does not exist and life is meaningless],

you cannot

come out a

- free,
- strong

individual [i.e., cannot come out a mature spiritual adult personality].

You may again
fall back into the

- misleading,
- shallow

comfort of
false religion [with its “certainty” and dogma that the external
authority of the god-image is real and should be obeyed and
called upon for help rather than develop your own strength].

If [on the other hand]
you develop
your own strength
for the very reason
that you feel alone [and in feeling alone, you have no “god”
to fall back on or ask for help],

then you
will be victorious, and
the road
to true religion
will be paved
by your own

- attitude and
- effort.

This [developing of your own strength]
is the only way you
can

- let go of
the phantom-god [i.e., the external god-image of false religion] and
- develop
the real God –
freedom
within.

The way to
Him [i.e., the way to the real God – freedom within]
is through
accepting
aloneness.

Such acceptance [i.e., such acceptance of aloneness]
will strengthen the

- independence and
- self-responsibility

essential to
the God-creature [the real God of your essence within]
you wish to become.

23

*If you understand
these words,
not only*
• *intellectually and*
• *superficially,*
but after
• *working for a while and*
• *coming across corresponding*
• *emotions,*
• *trends, and*
• *reactions*
within yourself,
you will understand
two things
a lot better than before.

*One [of the two things you will understand better]
is the lecture on*
duality. [See Pathwork Lecture #81, Conflicts in the World of Duality]

Accepting
• *death and*
• *the unknown*
is the only prerequisite for
accepting
• *life and*
• *happiness –*
[but this kind of accepting death is]
• *not accepting death*
with a wishful-thinking spirituality,
by avoiding your
• *fears and*
• *doubts;*
• *not by using religion*
as a crutch
to support you in the face of
• *fear and*
• *aloneness,*

but [rather]
• *recognizing and*
• *bravely encountering*
them [i.e., bravely encountering death, the unknown, fears,
doubts, and aloneness].

	<p><u>Only then</u> [i.e., <u>only when you bravely encounter death, the unknown, fears, doubts, and aloneness</u>]</p> <p><u>can</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>true religion and</u>• <u>knowledge</u> <p><u>replace</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>the false religion of escape and</u>• <u>the vague beliefs that serve only to cover up your fear.</u>
24	<p><u>There is</u> <u>a mutuality here.</u></p> <p><u>Accepting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>death and</u>• <u>the unknown</u> <p><u>is connected with</u> <u>acceptance of</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>independence and</u>• <u>self-responsibility.</u> <p><u>Both</u> [i.e., <u>both accepting death and the unknown as well as accepting independence and self-responsibility</u>]</p> <p><u>indicate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>spiritual and</u>• <u>emotional</u> <u>adulthood,</u>• <u>freedom,</u>• <u>growth,</u>• <u>creativity,</u>• <u>strength,</u>• <u>trust in the self, and</u>• <u>real security.</u>

[In contrast to this emotional climate of true religion]

**The emotional climate of
false religion
can be expressed
in these words:**

"I am a
• weak,
• helpless
sinner.

I can do nothing
without
• God,
without
• an authority
who permits me
to be happy.

This God
has the right
to be
• good or
• bad
to me.

But if I
• obey [in actions and in correct beliefs] and
• appease,

chances are that
he will be
well disposed
toward me,
or so I hope."

25

From a sense of
• humiliation
you will develop
• humility.

From

- clinging appeasement and
- blind obedience –
often without understanding
you will develop into a
 - strong
 - self-responsiblebeing
trusting in
your own capacity
to obtain
what you need in life.

You need

- the courage
now
to let go
 - of the illusion
of false religion,
 - of false consolation.

And in this

- transitory state [between your dying to false religion and being born
into true religion],
if you go through it [i.e., if you go through this purification and trans-
formational processes needed in moving from false to true religion],
your strength
will come from
the truth.

26

- The second point [of the two points you will understand a lot better]
is the reason why I have often
emphasized for quite some time
 - the psychological
rather than
 - the spiritual
point of view.

For none of you
are free of
the distortion
of spirituality;
namely, its use [to bypass this growth process, i.e., its use]
as
• escape,
as
• a substitute for your weaknesses,
as
• a consolation for your fears,
as
• an attempt to appease God
to get
what you could easily obtain
by your own efforts.

When [false] religion
is a substitute [for doing your psychological work of self-confrontation],
• it may help
for a while.

• It may assuage
unreasonable fear.

But
in the long run,
• it cripples
• you and
• your growth.

I sometimes have to
refrain from
stating a spiritual truth directly
because
your subconscious
would
• misunderstand and
• misuse
it [e.g., use a spiritual truth as an escape, bypassing
doing your psychological work or use it as dogma to
cling to and obey, or rebel against it, thereby, in all
ways, turning spiritual truth into a false religion
based upon dependence on the child's god-image].

But

- ***the more problems***
you resolve [on your own, through your work on the path],
- ***the safer it becomes***
to tell you the truth [i.e., to tell you a spiritual truth directly]
without the danger
of reinforcing in you
the tendency
to succumb to
false religion.

Then [as you resolve more and more problems on your own]
true religion

will come

- ***out of***
 - ***your own strength*** *[i.e., from your true divinity*
within – true religion],
- ***not out of***
 - ***dogma*** *[taught by external authority for you to believe*
and obey – false religion].

It [i.e., true religion]

will come

from

within

and not,

as you now

unconsciously expect it,

from

without.

27

Developing

your own

- ***resources and***
- ***strengths***

instead of

obtaining them

from a being

outside of yourself

is no less divine *[i.e., developing your own resources is no less divine than obtaining*
resources and strengths from a being outside of yourself].

Quite

the contrary.

With this understanding,
you will not mind
my returning
occasionally
to a
more spiritual approach
[in order for you]
to see where
the psychological
deviations –
the

- images,
- the
- distortions,
- the
- wrong conclusions,
- the
- false solutions –

directly
contradict
the spirituality
that you all aim for.

Then,
and only then,
will you
fully understand
that these [spiritual and psychological aspects of the path]
are
not
two unrelated subjects:
[rather]

- one

is an integral part of

- the other.

28	<p><i><u>Now, my friends, are there any questions regarding this topic?</u></i></p>
29	<p><u>QUESTION:</u> <u>Could you explain</u> <u>what</u> <u>• true religion is,</u> <u>as compared to</u> <u>• the wrong attitude?</u></p> <p><u>Where does</u> <u>belief in God</u> <u>come in</u> <u>if you don't</u> <u>feel</u> <u>He is a help?</u></p> <p><u>I just don't quite follow this.</u></p>
30	<p><u>ANSWER:</u> <u>You will</u> <u>feel</u> <u>that God is a help</u> <u>when you</u> <u>come to</u> <u>true religion</u> <u>after abandoning</u> <u>the crutch</u> [i.e., <u>the crutch of clinging to the god-image of false religion</u>], <u>but</u> [you will feel God's help in true religion] <u>in a</u> <u>completely different sense.</u></p> <p><u>Now</u> [while you still cling to the god-image of false religion as a crutch] <u>you need</u> <u>God's help</u> <u>because</u> <u>you make</u> <u>yourself</u> <u>helpless.</u></p>

Then [i.e., when you come to experience true religion]
you will
feel
God's help
because
you will perceive
the perfection
of

- the universe and
- its laws,
of which
you
are an
 - integral,
 - contributing
part.

You will
feel
that
you
are the driving force
of your life.

You can
help
yourself
if you
really want to,
if you
are ready to
sacrifice something.

31

Let us say,
you want
happiness
in a certain direction –
and this is
not

- some vague feeling,

but

- a clearly defined goal.

[In true religion]

You will

- seek and
- find
- how

you

have prevented

this [clearly defined goal for] happiness so far and

- what

you

can now do

to obtain it [i.e., to obtain this happiness] by
your own endeavors.

You will understand

what this [i.e., what removing blocks to happiness, blocks you have put in place]
demands

of you [i.e., what the price of your happiness in this aspect of your
life is, or what “sacrifice” you will have to make to achieve it],

and it will be

up to you

either

- to fulfill these demands [and pay the price]
because you decide

they are worthwhile [and are worth the price]

or

- abstain from [fulfilling] them [assessing that obtaining
happiness in this particular aspect of your life is not
worth the price or sacrifice demanded of you].

But [if you choose not to make the sacrifice or pay the price demanded of you]

there will

not

be a gnawing feeling

in your soul

that you are a

- neglected and
 - unjustly treated
- child.

True religion

is

- spiritual and
- emotional

maturity [i.e., true religion is psychological and
spiritual adulthood].

God's role [in true religion]
is not
to provide you
with things you do not wish [to expend the effort required]
to obtain
for yourself.

But [in true religion]
the God-consciousness
will reveal to you

- **that His world**
is wonderful and
- **that**
you
have much more power [i.e., you have much more power
from your Divine essence]
than you have yet realized,

if only
you set it [i.e., if only you set this Divine power and essence from within]
in motion
by removing
your own obstacles
to fulfillment [by doing the psychological work required].

32

The false religious attitude
arises

- **when you ask God**
to help you overcome
a hardship in your life
- **and then you**
 - **sit down and**
 - **wait.**

You do
not
examine sufficiently
why
you have this hardship.

You may do so [i.e., you may examine why you have the hardship]
peremptorily [i.e., dutifully, without debate or questioning],
because
someone else in authority
has told you to do so.

But even while you attempt this examination,
[unconsciously]
you tend to try to
prove
that you have
nothing to do with
the hardship.

[You insist that you are a helpless unfortunate victim and that]
It [i.e., the hardship]
has just
fallen upon you
undeservedly,
and there is
no way of getting out of it
unless
God intervenes
with an act of grace.

You do not muster the
• inner will and
• stamina
to find
how you
can really get
what you want
out of
your own creativity.

33

God
is in
you.

The divine forces
are in
you

if you
• mobilize them,
rather than
• wait for them
to come in from
the outside.

And the mobilization
of these forces [that are in you]
can happen
only if
you let go of
• some [unconscious]
damaging attitude,
• something destructive [in you, but of which you are unconscious]
that, again, is up to
you
to find.

[In true religion]

The
• strength and
• security
coming from this attitude [of doing your own work]
will give you
an entirely different
• relationship to God,
as well as
an entirely different
• God-concept.

Emotionally,
• the words
may often remain the same [in both true and false religion]
but
• the concept and
• the inner climate
will be different.

34

The words
are often the same
for both
• true
and
• false
religion,
but
the inner experience
is
entirely different.

Both
• the false
and
• the true
religions
say that
God's grace
exists.

Even though
you are on your own [in true religion],
the grace
still exists.

But this understanding [i.e., this understanding that God's grace still exists
even though you are on your own in true religion]
will not come
until you
assume responsibility
for yourself.

As long as you [stay in false religion and]
expect God's grace
to make up for
your human
• laziness and
• greed,

you must be disappointed,
whether or not
you admit this [disappointment] to yourself.

So [in false religion where you become disappointed in God's grace because it does not make up for your laziness by giving you what you desire even though you do not do what you could do to obtain what you desire]

you become

- hurt and
- angry and
- rebellious.

[When false religion thus fails you by God's grace not giving you what you want despite your not doing what you could do to get what you desire]

You then

either

- turn away from God altogether,
denying His very existence
in the universe,

or

- you consider yourself
an isolated case of neglect,
partly
 - unworthy of His
 - grace and
 - help and
partly
 - unjustly treated.

So [in false religion]

you wallow in

- guilt and
- self-pity.

This makes you [even] more

- dependent and
- helpless –

and so the vicious circle continues
in atoning for your rebellion against God
by appeasing Him even more with
fearful obedience

that is

- entirely on the surface and
- caused by the sickest motivations.

35

QUESTION:
I understand.

But how can we go about it?

This God-image
is so embedded in us
after so many decades of
learning the false attitude [of false religion].

Wouldn't
prayer
change too
if we
discarded this concept [of false religion]?

Wouldn't
everything
change?

36

ANSWER:
Yes,
of course.

But you see, my child,
you cannot [simply] say,

"Now I will discard my God-image."

It [i.e., this discarding of your God-image]
is not something
you can simply decide
in your mind.

It does not work that way.

Its [i.e., your God-image's]
[damaging and blocking] emotional impact
would remain
if you tried to change it
by a mere outer decision [of your mind or will].

In order to make an
inner
decision [i.e., an inner decision to discard your God-image],
the procedure
has to be the same
it has always been
in this [psychological] work.

[Here is the work required in true religion]

- Find
these attitudes [related to your God-image] and
- understand
them more fully.

If this [i.e., if finding and understanding your attitudes related to your God-image]
is done
deeply,
not
just superficially,
you will all be surprised
to find how far you have gone
to forcefully perpetuate
infancy.

Once you

- analyze and
- understand
certain [heretofore mostly unconscious]
emotional behavior patterns,

you will realize

- how preposterous they [i.e., how preposterous
certain emotional behavior patterns] are;
- how incompatible [they are]
with your conscious belief;
- how contrary [they are]
to your own best interests;
- how logically impossible [they are].

After

- seeing and
- understanding
all this,

the change happens
organically,
by itself, as it were.

A certain period of self-observation is necessary in order to

- *gain full insight* [*concerning certain emotional behavior patterns*]

and then

- *be able to change* [*these certain emotional behavior patterns*].

37

You must find these

- *subtle and unobtrusive emotional reactions.*

They [*i.e., these emotional reactions*]
are

neither

- *obvious*

nor

- *strong.*

Nor are they

- *completely unconscious.*

They [*these emotional behavior patterns and reactions blocking what you desire*]
are there

but

- *they are subtle, and you are so used to them that you do not even see anything amiss.*

To

- *find them* [*i.e., to find these emotional behavior patterns and reactions blocking what you desire*]

and

- *analyze them is the first step,*

and then

- *see them in light of this discussion.*

This [finding, analyzing, and seeing these emotional behavior patterns and reactions blocking what you desire]

will help to dissolve

the God-image [reinforced in you by false religion]

because

your attitude will naturally change.

You will, for instance, find

- *what your expectations really are,*
- *how you inwardly complain.*

You will find

- *what*

you yourself

could do

to make these expectations a reality,

and you will understand

- *why*

you have not done so.

This should be

the procedure [i.e., the procedure for going from the God-image of false religion to the true God of true religion].

38

The very fact that

you are aware of

this God-image

makes you

extremely fortunate;

many others

are not aware of it [i.e., not aware of this God-image]

at all.

[Rather]

They are convinced

they do not have

any distortion

in this respect [i.e., in respect to this God-image].

	<p><i><u>They do not connect</u></i> <i><u>certain emotional reactions</u></i> <i><u>with</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>this God-image,</u></i> <p><i><u>with</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>the false religious attitude.</u></i> <p><i><u>They are filled</u></i> <i><u>with their</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>conscious</u></i>• <i><u>right</u></i> <i><u>beliefs,</u></i> <p><i><u>while their</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>unconscious</u></i> <i><u>concepts</u></i> <i><u>are still</u></i> <i><u>too far from</u></i> <i><u>awareness.</u></i>
39	<p><i><u>QUESTION:</u></i> <i><u>What religion</u></i> <i><u>is farthest away from</u></i> <i><u>the truth?</u></i></p>
40	<p><i><u>ANSWER:</u></i> <i><u>One cannot make</u></i> <i><u>such a statement.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>It may be that</u></i> <i><u>one religious denomination</u></i> <i><u>has more</u></i> <i><u>truthful teachings,</u></i></p> <p><i><u>but</u></i> <i><u>another</u></i> <i><u>that has fewer [truthful teachings]</u></i> <i><u>may,</u></i> <i><u>in its</u></i> <i><u>overall attitude,</u></i> <i><u>be closer to</u></i> <i><u>truth.</u></i></p>

	<p><i><u>Apart from</u></i> <i><u>being dangerous</u></i> <i><u>to draw such comparisons,</u></i> <i><u>the question</u></i> <i><u>is not important.</u></i></p>
41	<p>QUESTION: <i><u>One of the last words of Christ</u></i> <i><u>was,</u></i> <i><u>"Father, Thy will be done."</u></i></p> <p><i><u>Taken as an example,</u></i> <i><u>this could have meant</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>obedience,</u></i>• <i><u>or it could have meant</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>freedom.</u></i></p>
42	<p>ANSWER: <i><u>Exactly.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>As I said before,</u></i> <i><u>the words [in true and false religion]</u></i> <i><u>are often</u></i> <i><u>the same.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>Truth</u></i> <i><u>can</u></i> <i><u>so easily</u></i> <i><u>be misinterpreted</u></i> <i><u>because</u></i> <i><u>the essence of truth</u></i> <i><u>is the</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>willingness and</u></i>• <i><u>capacity</u></i> <i><u>to understand.</u></i></p>

For example,
from what I have discussed tonight,
you could easily infer
that there can be

no grace of God.

If you are supposed to be
• free and
• independent
[as you are in true religion],
where does grace come in [in true religion]?

You would
not even need it [i.e., not need grace in true religion].

[But]
This [i.e., the statement that there is no grace of God]
is not true.

Grace
does exist [in true religion].

But
no
words
can convey
the concept of grace

unless
you have first reached
this true inner religious experience [of true religion].

When you
• no longer need grace
as a substitute
for your own weakness [as you do in false religion],

when you
• do not make
an asset out of
your weakness [as you do in false religion],

then
you will become strong [from your inner Divinity, as you do in true religion].

*For a while [i.e., in the in-between period after having given up false religion
but not yet having reached true religion]*

*you will live
without
any understanding of
grace,
but then
the true concept [of grace espoused by true religion]
will dawn on you.*

*In other words,
this interim state
of aloneness [i.e., this interim state without God and His grace, the state
between having left behind false religion and not yet
having arrived at true religion]
must first be experienced.*

*The great mystics
designate it [i.e., designate this interim state]
as
the "dark night of the soul."*

43

*The saying
you just mentioned,

"Thy will be done,"

means,
rightly understood,
"I let go
of my
• small self-will,
of my
• limited outlook,

and I open myself
so that
the divine
can come to me."*

It [i.e., the divine]
will not come
from without
but [will come]
from within,
as a

- deep knowledge and
- certainty,

but [the divine essence will come in this way as a deep knowledge and certainty]
only if
you will not
disassociate yourself
from this realization.

Experience of
unity with the divine
[that is experienced in true religion]
can happen only
if you

- learn to
let go,

if you

- cease to be
rigid.

44

The false meaning [in false religion] of
"Thy will be done"
makes humanity
seem

- weak and
- stupid,

so that
you need another being [here God]
to

- act and
- decide

instead of you.

This other being [who is to act and decide instead of you]
is often a

- **human authority or**
- **church authority**
claiming to act
on behalf of God.

"Thy will be done"

does not mean

- **obedience [to an external authority, here an authority claiming to act on behalf of God, as is its meaning in false religion];**

it [i.e., "Thy will be done"]

means

- **opening yourself**
to the fullest possible extent
so that
the greater wisdom
will become a part of you [as is its meaning
in true religion].

45

QUESTION:

From what you say,
it becomes clear that
religion
is a matter of
each individual soul
developing to its
optimum point
by way of

- **search and**
- **self-realization.**

The Churches
have played
a dominant role
for many years, however,
so it would seem that
their function
would
eventually
fall away.

46

ANSWER:

Yes,

indeed it [i.e., yes, indeed the church's function in helping souls develop to an optimum point] will [fall away as individuals take on their own role in their development by way of self-search and self-realization].

When more people follow a path of self-recognition,
• growing and
• developing
their own resources,
they will no longer need [external] authority.

As for those who are not yet far enough in their development [and whose inner authority is, therefore, still too immature and undeveloped],
human law [rather than religious law] will suffice to protect society from their
• untamed and
• destructive impulses.

The truly divine can function only in free souls,
and this [i.e., the divine functioning in free souls] will happen.

The whole trend of history points in this direction [as true religion emerges more completely and false religion dies away].

47	<p>QUESTION: <u>You spoke about companionship.</u></p> <p><u>At times one has to be alone.</u></p> <p><u>How can you tell when that's [i.e., when being alone is] appropriate?</u></p>
48	<p>ANSWER: <u>There is a simple answer to that [in true religion], although it's not always easy to know.</u></p> <p><u>When you</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>investigate your emotional reactions</u> <p><u>and</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>find that you want companionship out of fear of being alone,</u> <p><u>then the need for companionship springs, at least partly, from a poor motive.</u></p> <p>[Conversely]</p> <p><u>If you want to be alone out of fear of involvement because you have a strong tendency to withdraw,</u></p> <p><u>then your desire to be alone springs, again at least in part, from a poor motive.</u></p>

In other words,
either tendency [i.e., either wanting companionship or wanting to be alone]
can be

- *healthy*

as well as

- *unhealthy.*

An integrated
human being
needs
both

- *companionship*

and

- *solitude,*

and [needs] both [i.e., needs both companionship and solitude]
for

- *constructive reasons,*

rather than [needing companionship or solitude]
to

- *avoid something you fear.*

The right answer
can come
only
from
rigorous self-examination [as happens in the work of true religion].

49

More and more,
you will see that
truth
cannot be stated as
a rigid law [as is often the case in false religion].

It [i.e., truth]
always depends on

- *how you feel and*
- *what the underlying motives are*

[and the discovering of these motives is the work in true religion].

50	<p>QUESTION: <u>I try to find words</u> <u>to express</u> <u>my inner conflicts.</u></p> <p><u>The words [I find to express my inner conflicts]</u> <u>seem exaggerated.</u></p> <p><u>How can I</u> <u>keep my words</u> <u>level with</u> <u>what I find in my search?</u></p>
51	<p>ANSWER: <u>First of all,</u> <u>you will have to understand better</u> <u>the reason</u> <u>for your</u> <u>self-dramatization.</u></p> <p><u>Once you understand that,</u> <u>the need [i.e., the need to over-dramatize your inner conflicts]</u> <u>will lessen.</u></p> <p><u>There will be</u> <u>a more proportionate relationship</u> <u>between your</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>words</u><u>and your</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>feelings.</u></p> <p><u>Again,</u> <u>the remedy</u> <u>is</u> <u>not</u> <u>to use</u> <u>self-discipline</u> <u>to stop this.</u></p>

	<p><u>Even if you should</u> <u>succeed [in stopping the self-dramatization of your inner conflicts by</u> <u>using self-discipline],</u></p> <p><u>another,</u> <u>perhaps more harmful,</u> <u>symptom</u> <u>will come forth.</u></p> <p><u>Rather,</u> <u>use such manifestations [of self-dramatizations of your inner conflicts]</u> <u>as the useful [and revealing] symptoms</u> <u>they are.</u></p>
52	<p><u>QUESTION:</u> <u>Can I do it [i.e., can I use such manifestations as symptoms in my work of</u> <u>self-understanding by]</u></p> <p><u>trying to</u> <u>evaluate the words [I am using]?</u></p>
53	<p><u>ANSWER:</u> <u>Certainly.</u></p> <p><u>That would be part of</u> <u>your private work:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>which</u> <u>words you use and</u>• <u>why.</u>
54	<p><u>QUESTION:</u> <u>Often it is very easy</u> <u>for</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>one subconscious</u> <u>to communicate with</u>• <u>another.</u> <p><u>But there are [other] times</u> <u>when there is such a</u> <u>strong barrier</u> <u>that</u> <u>one cannot penetrate [the other].</u></p>

*The other person
asks for the answer
yet doesn't listen,
and you fail to convey your message.*

55

*ANSWER:
Such people
want
only
• a qualified answer;
that is,
• an answer
compatible
with
their defenses.*

*They do not want an answer
that they find
unpleasant.*

*This [i.e., this unpleasant answer to their question]
would cause
an inner resistance
so strong
that
they could not hear
your call.*

*[At this present time with this resistance]
They cannot
absorb
what is being said to them.*

*The [best] attitude
toward a person
in this frame of mind
is
not
to try to force
the issue.*

The more
you want to
penetrate
the resistance,
the more
• frustration and
• impatience
you will feel [in yourself].

And this [i.e., And your impatience]
is bound to affect
the other person [negatively]
and increase the resistance
even more.

Moreover,
[in true religion]
it will be
extremely useful [to your self-understanding and development]
to analyze
the reason
for your own
• frustration and
• impatience.

It [i.e., Your desire to communicate with the other]
may be
more than
the goodwill to help.

In some way
your sense of competence
may be involved.

Or
the other's
acceptance of the truth
may have
an urgency for you
that is not realistic.

Whenever
such currents exist [between two people],
a mutually negative effect
is established
that worsens
the inner problems
of both parties.

But
finding
what inner hidden role
you
play
will be
beneficial,
possibly even
for both parties.

If you had
no

- negative or
- problematic

tendencies,
you could
easily
accept
another person's
limitation.

You know that.

Now, this is
a general answer,
applying to many.

56

If there is
anything
unclear
in what I discussed tonight,
I will be only too glad
to elaborate on it
next time.

57

May these words
raise
echoes
in your emotions.

As you
let this lecture
affect you,
it will
stir up
so much!

This is good.

I go from you
with all our blessings
for the coming year
for the work that is before you.

Yes,
help
is given to you,

but do try to recognize
that you might [not yet experience true religion and hence will still]
perceive it [i.e., still perceive the help]

as

- coming from
outside,
- unconnected with
your own
 - endeavors and
 - strivings,

and not as
something
that you mobilize,
first of all,
in yourself.

58

With this,
my dearest ones,
be blessed!

- **Love and**
- **peace**
unto
all of you.

Be in God!

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