

POSITIVE THINKING -- RIGHT AND WRONG KIND

In the name of the Lord, I greet you, my friends, and I bring you His blessing. There are many people, when they come in contact with God, with absolute truth, with the spirit world, they believe this experience -- the certainty of all this -- can come to them by some staggering "proof" they personally receive. But, my friends, it cannot happen this way. When you desire this kind of "proof," you thus think you can eliminate your doubts. Doubts which are, in themselves, understandable enough. However, your doubts can never disappear by the sort of proofs you hope for. Doubt is the opposite of faith. And faith, my friends, is nothing else in reality than the experience, the certainty of all that you may doubt presently; it is the inner experience. And inner experience cannot come into existence by outer happenings. So we are dealing here with two entirely different levels of consciousness. To accomplish something within you, you have to prepare therefore also the inner respective conditions by finding and conquering your inner blocks, hurdles, obstacles, in short everything that stands in your way to faith in its true meaning.

Let us suppose you would receive the kind of proof you hope for without your inner obstacles being removed by yourselves first. At the moment, you would certainly be impressed. You might say, "Indeed this is strange, this is wonderful, it is astounding." Yet, after this first effect has worn off, the doubts existing within you would come to the surface again. You would say to yourselves, "Perhaps the medium knew about it," or at the best you might say all this was "coincidence." So you see, when outer occurrences are not substantiated within, the greatest outer effect must wear off or fade out after a while because these two levels of perception can never replace one another. They can only be integrated by the steady growth of inner development. Experience of absolute truth is like a living organism. It cannot come to you by the most miraculous outer happenings. It can only be nursed, cared for, developed like any living organism. Also physical growth happens slowly but surely, step by step. You hardly notice the growth while it is going on, but all of a sudden you discover the preceding gradual development. It is thus with all physical growth and not a bit different with spiritual or emotional growth. Any seeming short cut has never any lasting effect and is therefore a farce. Short cuts, sudden measures supposed to eliminate the effort of setting slow growth in motion is in accordance with the laws of the powers of darkness. Their ways are immediately very effectual, very quick but never, never lasting, while slow growth and development is in accordance with the divine law and must be eventually crowned by success. Therefore it would be good for all my friends who find themselves in this position to remember that you cannot come to the kind of faith we are talking about by a single experience, astounding as it may be. But you will obtain this faith by working spiritually, by walking on this path of perfection, by getting to know yourselves as you really are, by understanding your inner conflicts and finding out in what way you have -- being only in emotional reaction -- broken the spiritual laws. Step by step as you proceed to free yourselves of your inner chains, the doubts will come less and less often. They will not disappear suddenly but will recur more and more seldom with less and less strength until they gradually disappear altogether. This is the only way, my friends. Anything given to you merely from

the outside would only have a momentary effect, but never, never in the long run. As I said, this is the law for all divine things. Anything that is substantial and permanent grows slowly with a maximum of personal effort, little by little, and while it happens, you may not even be aware of the extent in which you and your faith, your experience of the absolute, your sense for it grows.

But not only people at the beginning of this path or on the threshold of it need to know about these facts. For, as I have explained, even those already in the process of their proper inner development find themselves occasionally, though less often and with less impact, assailed by their original doubts. For these inevitable times of doubting, I wish to give you some simple advice, my friends, how to go about meeting these doubts. Most of you know that there are two forces within the human soul. There is the higher self or the divine spark, that part of man where he strives upwards, that part of man that wishes perfection for the whole human being, complete integration. And in this part, you know all your conscious being doubts, and this part of you wants to convey this knowledge to your consciousness. The other part, the lower self -- and this comprises not only your faults and weaknesses, but also your ignorance and all the facets where you consciously or unconsciously break divine law -- is again divided, at least quite often, into two further parts. One fears the certainty of the spiritual world, for knowledge also means responsibility, and man in his lower nature prefers to remain ignorant because thus he is not obliged to conquer his lower self, which is indeed not easy. The other wishes dearly the truth of all he still doubts because, difficult as it may be to attain, it means eternal happiness and bliss. But the fear in his lower self tells him all this may be an illusion, wishful thinking. So both currents of the lower self, each for their own reasons, try to make man doubt, the latter in order to avoid disappointment. Therefore the higher self and the lower self are at war with one another. And whenever there is an inner disharmony, it means that man's two natures are fighting. So whenever doubt reappears, it is the lower self of man speaking. When the doubt is gone, the higher self is speaking. Then you know that God, His wonderful creation, His spirit world is truth where everything is possible, where no unhappiness need ever exist. But when the lower self is stronger, you believe doubt, despair, hopelessness may, after all, be true. Now, it is just the question for you to settle which side is right, which side is actually the truth. For this is really the question it boils down to. All you should do while you are in doubt is to retire into quietness. Formulate this argument in clear-cut, concise thought, and ask God the simple question: "Which is true?" And then keep yourselves open for the answer. Do not expect that this answer can always be given to you immediately. In the days to follow, just keep aware of it. In one way or another, you will eventually receive it.

But actually the answer is really already settled within you, although you may not know it yet, by the mere fact that when you are in doubt, you are depressed. And when you are in the state of experiencing truth, you feel happy. And truth must always make you happy, even unpleasant truth. All my friends on the path have experienced this, how they must occasionally encounter unflattering or unpleasant facets within themselves, but when desire for the truth within becomes greater than all else, this unpleasant truth will always strengthen and make you happy. By the same token, if you observe your feelings closely, you will find that untruth, pleasant as it may seem at the moment, never really gives you peace, for deep down your higher self always has the correct answer, and you must feel it. Thus truth will never depress you, my dear friends. And there you find the answer to the question you have not settled yet when you are in doubt. But if you are not satisfied with your own inner voice that tells you the truth, and should you wish additional answers, ask God this question. Formulate your feelings: "Which is true? I am ready to receive the answer." I promise you the answer, provided you do not forget about it, you do not put it out of your mind, but in a

relaxed and serene way, patiently and yet aware of it, you go about your business, and truth will be shown to you, which of the two battling sides within you has the right answer. And even those friends at the beginning of this path may make use of this advice and handle it in a similar way.

And when you have overcome the hurdles within you, when you are mature enough to remain in a state of truth, the proofs that you have first wished, for the one purpose of being able to believe, this proof will come to you also from without -- not once, but a hundred times. But the purpose will not be to make you see reality as it actually is, to make you convinced, to overcome your doubts, but these proofs, much more than you ever dreamed possible and in a much more wonderful way than you ever thought possible, will just come as a natural by-product of your inner victory. In other words, their purpose is not to convince you, for this is quite impossible anyway, as I have explained. But they are the natural result, or part of the result, when one walks the path to God. When you do not need this proof anymore, you will receive it abundantly. These incidents will just be an additional confirmation for you, and it will surely make you happy, but it will not represent the condition by which you can believe and accept truth. This again is profound wisdom and divine law, and it should not be any different.

And now I wish to talk about a much disputed subject among my friends, the subject of positive thinking. Positive thinking is indeed essential for the person who wants to grow spiritually. But unfortunately, it is often misunderstood and wrongly applied. To build clean and proper thoughts according to divine law is of course one of the fundamentals because, as you know, your thoughts are reality, they have form and substance. And by unclean thoughts, you build disharmonious forms which must eventually have their effect in your lives and destinies. However, not only thoughts have this effect, but also feelings, emotional reactions, or subconscious thoughts. It is in any case the great temptation of the spiritually and emotionally immature person to put everything uncomfortable into the subconscious where it does infinitely more harm than any conscious thought, be it the worst. For consciously it can be dealt with and met, while it smolders like a time bomb when it is enclosed in the subconscious mind, from where the disharmonious forms build themselves every bit as destructively from conscious thought. The diligent student of the positive thinking principle is therefore often encouraged to do just what is worst for him. He is so concerned by not harboring any negative thoughts that he is inclined to push all negative thoughts existing in him into his subconscious, thus disregarding the discrepancy in him -- what he wants to think and what he actually still thinks or feels. It should be stressed that thoughts can be controlled by your conscious direction of will, just as your actions can. But your feelings cannot. You cannot directly control your feelings. You all know that. You may know very well that it is sinful to hate, but when hatred is still in you, you cannot change this inner current merely because you try to force yourself. Or if you do not love a person, you cannot force yourself to do so, as much as you may want to. The change can only be brought about quite indirectly, by remote control, if I may use this expression. With every step upwards you take on the path, step by step, your feelings will change automatically, naturally, and gradually. But one of the conditions to bring this about is that you make your subconscious known to your consciousness. And to try too hard the system of positive thinking may just work the other way around and induce you to think superficially what has no actual root in you. Thus you live a lie, well meant as it may be, and this is the most harmful of all things! Therefore it is imperative to meet what actually still exists in you squarely, face it, and yet when you are so concerned with this positive thinking, right as it is in the proper way, you fall into danger by your own good will and also partly by the side in you that hates to recognize the unpleasant currents within yourselves, that disregards what actually exists in you

and locks it up where it will ferment and will work much more against you than if your thoughts would remain conscious. So this is one important factor that you all should remember. Certainly you should practice positive thinking. Observe your thoughts, but observe quietly, detachedly, in a relaxed way, without guilt feelings that your emotions are not always parallel to your thoughts or to the way you want your thoughts and feelings to be. And you have to learn to view your own lower self, accepting its present existence although it is a temporary one -- how temporary depends entirely on yourselves. However, it is still a reality on this plane, and you cannot close your eyes to any reality on whatever plane this may be!

Another misunderstanding often arising in the principle of positive thinking -- or misuse or abuse of positive thinking -- is the following. Man wants to be happy. This is the most natural wish. This wish comes forth from the higher self as well as the lower self. Only, the higher self knows that there is a price to be paid. This price is all the effort one has to meet on the path: self-knowledge, overcoming of one's faults, learning the spiritual laws generally and applying them particularly and personally, etc., etc. The lower self, on the other hand, wants to attain happiness by outer means and without the price of conquering itself. And the basis for conquering the lower nature is that so difficult self-knowledge, honesty towards oneself, self-analysis. The lower self, in its pride, wants to be perfect without doing the necessary and often tiresome work for it. So both the higher and the lower self want happiness but each in a different way. Your higher self knows that only by perfection within can you achieve perfection without -- that, that is happiness. Your lower self is not prepared to pay any price; it "wants to have the cake and eat it too." If you have difficulties in your lives, you all know that they are but the result of your lower nature, the result of your breaking divine law in some respect, often in many respects. The mature person has to be prepared to pay this price, to accept the workings of the law -- and thus to honor God. He will not try to get out of paying. However, misapplied or misunderstood positive thinking wants to have outer perfection often too quickly, merely by learning thought control, which is not enough. Thus man's lower nature borrows this principle because it fits very well to what it wants.

The first step to true positive thinking is to take the consequences of what he has done at a past time. Whether it concerns a previous incarnation or this very same life, the mature person and true follower of positive thinking will say: "I have gone against the law, and the effects have to be worked out. This means I have to, among other things, accept these conditions." We often observe people who try very hard to practice positive thinking. But one reason of trying so hard is that subconsciously -- and the thoughts not being clearly formulated -- in their desire for happiness coming from the lower self, they are inclined to quarrel with God and destiny because difficulties and hardship exist in life. You may absorb intellectually all you want that God did not want your difficulties in the first place and that you yourselves are responsible for it, but emotionally you have not learned this truth as long as you are not willing to pay. And paying means accepting your difficulties, knowing that they are but temporary, for God is love and wants all His children to be happy, but happiness can only be achieved by, among other things, consciously accepting the laws of cause and effect and not trying to get out of the effect by mere thought control. Happiness cannot come to you as long as you love yourselves so dearly that a little pain becomes so terrible that you are unwilling to bear it. Only by accepting this pain can you become detached enough from your own ego that pain will not be necessary anymore for your development. That does not mean that you should "resign," or become hopeless or wallow in your little pains and tribulations. It means that you should be perfectly aware that every difficulty in your life is self-inflicted and therefore you have to go through it, bear it, accept it, and, most important of all, find within you the cause so as to

eliminate this cause once and for all. This cause can only be found on the path by self-knowledge. Find the fault in you responsible for your outer hardship, eliminate this fault, and know that the outer manifestation of the evil root cannot disappear immediately but has to be dissolved, again, by the process of slow, organic growth. And as long as this lasts, honor God by accepting His laws. Do not love yourselves so much that you shirk a little pain, but shoulder it courageously and humbly, not making your own little comfort so important. This is the true and best way to practice positive thinking. For in this attitude, you will be penetrated by the profound conviction that God's world is a happy world in which you have nothing to fear, in which you have so much to look forward to. Your sense of time will gradually change. Not only by intellectual knowledge but by deep feeling, you will know that the time your little pain lasts is but so short, viewed from the spiritual and only real outlook.

You all have heard often, be it from me or others, that not the fact that you have difficulties is important, but how you take these difficulties. And I have shown you how you should meet them. "He who wants to win his life will lose it. He who is ready to give it up will win it." What does that mean, my friends? -- exactly what I have just explained. If you are constantly so afraid of a little pain, if you hold on so tightly to your own ego, to your own little sensitivity or vanity, you do not give up your life. You hold it too tightly, and therefore you must lose it -- to lose in the spiritual sense, in the sense that you cannot find peace, harmony, happiness within or without. But he who does not take himself so seriously, whose comfort and everything pertaining to the ego is not so terribly important, whose own little pains and hurt vanities do not matter so much, he who does not think constantly, "If I show my affection or my true feelings, what will people think? I might be hurt or I might jeopardize something," he truly gives himself up -- or gives up his life. He does not hold on to himself so tightly, and thus he will receive life, again, in the spiritual sense. He will find harmony within by going with the law, and he must find the love and respect from others he could never find by holding on to himself so fast.

Therefore it is of utmost importance on the spiritual path to learn to give up one's life in the true meaning, and that entails also to be able to accept pain. And misunderstood application of positive thinking leaves out this entire chapter of spiritual development.

The next time, my dear friends, I will talk about how we spirits see the human being, the whole unit of human personality, and how this affects the process of purification or the path of perfection or psychological therapy or whatever you want to call it. I want to give you the spiritual angle on this subject. And I wish to inform you that my next lecture will also take place in English so that more of you can profit by it. And we shall then see if we shall have a lecture in German again or not. But at any rate, the German lectures will take place less and less.

Before I turn to your questions, I would like you, my friend, from next time on, to arrange a little organization, as far as the question period is concerned. It would be advisable if you discuss beforehand with all participants who wants to ask questions, and then I suggest that you sift the questions by their importance, generally speaking, and see to it that they are asked in the order of their importance and their interest. If not all questions can be answered at that time, the rest can be carried over for the following session. It is more advisable to handle it this way because then there will be no pauses. In the spontaneous way, it is often the case that, though some friends very much want to ask questions, they hesitate because they are shy. They think someone else may want to ask, and they do not dare to speak up. Then there is an unnecessary pause that could be utilized. Now

that your circle gets bigger and bigger, these things will work out better if they are organized properly. And now, my dear ones, I am ready for your questions and will answer them to the best of my ability.

QUESTION: If, for instance, I want to ask something pertaining to the foregoing lecture, I would not know it before...

ANSWER: That is quite all right. You will have the opportunity to ask spontaneous questions pertaining to the foregoing lecture. Before I turn to the planned questions, I will ask all of you if there is anything about the preceding lecture that you would like to ask. And only afterwards, we will turn to the planned questions.

QUESTION: Why should an answer to our doubts come as an anticlimax?

ANSWER: I will tell you why. When man expects answers from God, from the spirit world, he somehow imagines that this must happen in a very dramatic way, or even melodramatic, some sort of "miracle." And yet this is not the way God works. God works through you or through other human beings, and the answers, granted, seem to happen so naturally that at the moment you may even be uncertain whether there was an answer. There is also a very good reason for this, in fact a number of reasons. One reason is that the highest state of happiness and grace -- the experience, the fact of the existence of the other world and its closeness to you -- must not be made too easy. Man has to be tested and tested, again and again, whether he is worthy of living in truth constantly. In short, man has to work for this; he has to keep his eyes open, his inner feelings and perception turned to the spirit world. He must not take it for granted; he must train these senses by observation and awareness. Thus he works upwards with everything given to him from the spirit world, and this is the way it should be. But if he meets it properly, the result will be infinitely better. He will not be sustained by some outer happenings or experiences, but from the strength and wisdom he has developed within, and thus he will find constant strength and happiness that is built on a rock and can never be pulled out from under his feet anymore. Thus the answers happen in a "worldly" way, almost as though by chance, so naturally -- and not "supernaturally." And that is why it seems like an anticlimax. And if you are not sure, take this uncertainty, voice your question clearly, and ask for truth. Ask whether this was an answer or not, and you will receive it again without a shadow of a doubt. Alas, it rarely occurs to people, even those who are accustomed to pray, to turn to God with all these little problems and uncertainties. You are prone to let these uncertainties, unformulated in your feelings, create a disorder in your soul. All these unclarified conflicts, big or small, weaken you. Therefore it would be very advisable to always turn to God with all things where you are uncertain. Ask for enlightenment, ask for truth. Ask for His will when a decision is to be made. You will thus reach the state we are always talking about and that you are all longing for much, much sooner.

QUESTION: How far is desirelessness a necessary step towards the path of perfection, and I refer especially to the differences of the teachings between East and West.

ANSWER: This desirelessness is also often misunderstood, not only by Westerners but also by Easterners. For some desire must remain in the human heart. And it is again the same old question that the how is so important, the shade of it, not a yes or no, but the how. In other words, in one way, there must be desire; in another way, desire must gradually cease. The desire must

remain to reach God, to experience Him, to serve Him, and by serving Him, serving one's brothers and sisters. This must not only be an intellectual wish, a dutiful wish because it is recognized to be the right thing, but this wish alone will bring happiness, or rather its fulfillment. By spiritual growth, the thing one desires merely changes. But where desirelessness should set in, however, is as far as the ego is concerned. This detachment, I am always talking about to my friends. Again, this cannot come by forcing oneself; it is just the natural result of spiritual growth. Again, you can only attain this state of being indirectly, not by merely wishing to be that way. Here again, it is important to be able to accept pain in a healthy way, as I have explained before. If you are so set against pain, if everything cringes in you at the thought of it, if you very much desire not to have pain, then therefore you are not detached. Thus you have to train yourselves that your pain, your vanity, and your comfort do not matter an iota more than that of the next fellow. And when you feel a little bit that you do not matter to yourselves any more than anyone else, whom you may not even know personally, and when you do not take yourselves to be more important, you are a step nearer this detachment and thus to your path to happiness.

When personal success or failure does not grip you inside -- and both can do that, one pleasurable, the other unpleasurable -- you have attained some of this detachment, in which alone you will find real security. For the security you are seeking is always dependent on things outside your control. Everything has to go your way so that you can feel happy, satisfied, and secure. But when it does not, you are lost and in the grip of forces within you that you cannot control. In other words, you are controlled by them, and you lose your serenity, or what you think is serenity when things go well. While being detached in the way that I mean, you are independent. You do not need outside conditions to give you harmony and security. You are swinging right along in the stream and never press against it. Nothing can touch you to throw you off. I realize that this is difficult for people to understand who are not that far yet. I do not even like to talk too much about it, for, as development proceeds properly, it comes by itself and need not be discussed too much; while hearing these words before one can feel their true flavor, you may be afraid to become detached because you must misunderstand, my friends. You think this kind of detachment means that you do not love any more or do not care, that you become resigned and indifferent. But this is not in the least true! For indifference means to be not alive, not to vibrate with vitality. And the higher you are on the path, the more alive you become. You do care and you do love, but differently, without the pangs of the ego, without the shadowy side that all good has on your plane. Your desires and the grantings of them do not really make you happy. They may give you a moment's satisfaction, but never peace of mind, serenity, steady happiness that can never be lost and which one does not have to fear as you do so often unconsciously because you are afraid of the consequences, afraid of the emotion which you are not mature enough yet to sustain.

So be not afraid, my friends. It is something to look forward to indeed. It will not happen suddenly, but you will grow with it. Like everything else, so too will this develop gradually and organically if you proceed on the path, and so you will not even be aware of it at the beginning, not aware that any transformation is taking place in you. You will just feel more and more at peace. Things that go wrong will not effect you anymore -- first, less than previously and finally not at all. You will not be gripped by anger, anxiety, hostility, or whatnot. You will live more and more constantly in a state of joy. And do not think that little joys will then give you less pleasure. On the contrary, now your capacity of enjoyment is hindered by your own disturbed soul, by all your desires and wishes, some of which are not capable of being fulfilled. While then, you will really enjoy.

As long as you are in the grip of your ego with its fears and anxieties, you cannot live in the present. You sometimes live in the past, and this is bad. And it is also true that you very often live in the future which, in its own way, is equally as bad. And this applies just as much to old people because by living in the future you think it sufficient to think of tomorrow or the next hour, and you do not live this very moment. You so often live in tomorrow. What does that mean? It means that there is some desire connected with it and that anxiety comes out of the wrong type of desire. If you fear something, you desire that this thing does not happen. So it is with most of you, almost all your life is lived somehow in the future, and thus you let life slip by you. You miss out on seeing and appreciating the most beautiful things right in front of your eyes. You do not see it because you are too busy with your desires. The now is lost for many of you because of your desires. If this kind of detachment is not reached, you constantly miss the happiness of the now. And I beg all of you, my friends, to whom the thought of this desirelessness or detachment is still a little frightening, do not think about it. It will come as a by-product if and when you follow this path of happiness. This is what I have to say about it.

QUESTION: When you speak of positive thinking, you say that we should be aware of the hatred or resentment we feel. But just how are we to relate the kind of thinking we should have with the feelings in us and not be in conflict?

ANSWER: When you go into meditation, listen within you. Just observe your inner feelings, reactions, and trends. Do not try to cover your true feelings for whatever motive. Say to God, "I want truth, also the temporary truth about me, about all my true feelings and thoughts." For you cannot reach absolute truth unless you discover first your own "temporary truth," unpleasant as this may be. Ask God, therefore, for your own truth; be ready to face it. Bring yourself to have the will for it above all else, by meditating about these words, for instance, by the fact that you cannot reach your goal without it, you can only free yourselves of all chains by knowing, facing, and conquering yourselves. Observe yourselves clinically. Then just note it; register it quite detachedly. Say to yourselves, "This is the way I want to think and feel, but in this or that respect my true feelings, my inner thoughts still deviate from what I have so far understood intellectually, but this understanding has not as yet reached my emotions." Watch it continuously, again and again, every day. Sometimes there will be a greater discrepancy, sometimes less; this depends on many things. By this process, if you practice this for a while, you learn several things at once. Number one, you learn to take yourselves as you are, and with that, the humility so many of you lack because you all want to be perfect. You want to be on top of the mountain, and you have not even reached the first valley yet. And this is also a kind of pride, coupled with laziness. You want to be there without getting there. Again, your lower self does not want to pay the price. So you learn humility. You learn to take yourselves as you are. You learn your true inner nature with all its faces, not only the faces you want to see. This whole process is extremely healthy, and it will give you infinitely more strength than any type of wishful thinking you might be tempted to use, prompted by a misunderstood theory of positive thinking. This is much more positive thinking, for you to learn to live in reality, the reality you have made your own for the time being by your previous attitudes. If you do just this for some time and get accustomed to accepting your imperfection, living in your lower nature objectively, almost coldly, without feeling too disturbed about it -- less and less disturbed about it -- after a while, you will come to the next step.

This next step is to meditate about the divine law regarding your inner trend that has broken it. Whoever follows this path, whoever sincerely wants to walk it will definitely be guided to the

very teacher, best for his particular personality and problems. This must happen and always will happen. Because you cannot take this path without teachings from the outside. You will thus learn what particular meditation is best for you and the problem you are dealing with. The same things in different individuals may need different approaches with each person, different types of meditations. Hate or resentment may have different roots, causes, or motives in different people. Therefore different meditations are necessary for different people. But this will come later. First this clinical observation of the self, the lower self with regard to the higher self, has to be practiced and fully mastered before the second phase sets in. You have to learn first to take yourselves as you are, to come down from the high place you have put yourselves in. Take yourselves humbly and without feelings of guilt, "This is the way I am, but this is the way I want to be. And to bridge over the discrepancy, I have to have patience, will power, and have to work steadily and unceasingly, for otherwise I cannot expect to own the spiritual place I endeavor to." After you have learned that, your particular second phase will be made known to you, that you can rest assured.

QUESTION: You told me last time to talk to my father, and I want to ask about this. I have difficulties about it because I am not sure when he is around, and at the same time I am afraid that he might be around waiting for me to speak to him, and I don't know it and think of something other than my father.

ANSWER: My dear child, in the first place, in spirit, distance does not exist in the sense you experience it here. There is only spiritual distance, not a geographical one. In other words, when a spirit being utters the thought, "I want to be there," he is there. He does not have to travel great distances because dense matter does not stand in the way. By the same token, if there is a bond between you and a dear one in the beyond and if it is at all possible for this person in the spirit world to be in contact with you, your thoughts will bring him close to you in the sense that you can commune with him, quite automatically. But let us assume that in some cases it is not possible, even then your thoughts will never be lost. But in your case, the contact is very close anyway, but even if a spirit is prevented from automatically taking in the thoughts of another person, man or spirit, even if he is in another sphere and busy there, your thoughts will still be available to him because your thoughts are form, spiritual substance and do not dissolve if they are in any way important. They are not some vague, nebulous things. Even if this spirit sees later what you have thought, he sees these thought forms nevertheless. As for feeling guilty that you do not constantly think of him or speak to him when you have other things to do, that is equally wrong. There should be order, and no one should be a slave, even with regard to the help you want to extend. I would advise you to set aside each day at the same time a period in which you devote yourself to your father, to your conversation with him. Whether it is ten minutes, or even five minutes each day, or whether you do it, let us say, only three times a week, does not make any difference. It is up to you, but you should determine it and stick to it regularly. Then you will not feel guilty at other times, and you can be quite certain that he will hear you and be with you. Do you understand?

QUESTION: I want to ask if animals are reincarnated.

ANSWER: Oh yes, of course, they are. This subject would be a whole lecture in itself. I cannot go into it now in too much detail. But I only want to say that animals have their cycles too. Very often they are reincarnated into the same type of animal, and then the types change again until they reach the highest form of animal life. The highest form of animal life is not, as you may think, the monkey or the ape because its physical structure resembles most the human being. But it is the

horse, my friend, for various reasons. But the horse is gradually, little by little, dying out because its main function is obsolete in your world today. The horse was the highest animal because it was most essential to mankind. Man would not have had his daily bread without the horse. Man could not have traveled without the horse. Both these functions do not seem to have any spiritual reasons, and yet anything of physical importance may be in direct or indirect influence for man's spiritual development. Since man has today found other means to receive his bread and transportation and so on, the horse is not necessary anymore. Therefore whatever man does to prevent the horse from dying out will be to no avail because it has lost its function in the plan. But this goes very slowly, of course.

QUESTION: I suppose it would be too long today, but perhaps next time you can tell us why the Hindu religion does not have the fall of the angels.

ANSWER: Yes, I will talk about it next time. But please remind me in the question period because in my lecture I will talk about this other subject I promised you, and I will then, if you want to, take this up as the first question.

QUESTION: What is the difference between "sponsors" and "masters" and "guides?"

ANSWER: All these are merely names, names you have chosen. And in other countries with other languages, there are different names. I have given a lecture about the spirits in the spirit world and their different functions. There are not only these three types you have mentioned, but there are many, many, many more, almost infinite varieties of functions and tasks and specialists. We have, of course, different names, and I do not particularly know of the designations you have used here, except "guide" of course, which is very universal. But I do not say that spirits who do use these names do not have something very particular in mind. But they use these words merely as a facility to express themselves towards human beings who would best understand these designations. But keep in mind that the vocabulary is not important in itself. I will talk occasionally in the future about the spirit world of God, about the various tasks of the spirits, and thus you will be able to have a little clearer picture.

QUESTION: In other words, there are many different workers?

ANSWER: Yes, there are many, many different workers.

QUESTION: To be a success in this world, is it rational intuition or... (the rest is inaudible.)

ANSWER: This depends entirely on the case. If you want to be a success in order to give to others, you can only succeed if you do it through God and through conquering yourself. But if there is contained in this wish also a little bit of ego, this should be recognized because it is a bond; it ties you. It is a chain, this importance to impress others; it prevents you from freedom. Oh, many people have this, so do not take these words personally. I speak generally, and indeed it is a very general subject. Many people wish success, while deep down in their heart they mean love. They wish recognition, respect, and admiration, and they want to obtain all this by being a success, by impressing other people. Actually they are often lonely people, lonely because they break spiritual law unconsciously. And they break it even more by covering up their real feelings, by being proud in closing themselves against others although they do this because they are in fear of being hurt and

they do not want to be so vulnerable. It is the wrong reaction, coming forth from their ignorant lower self. This whole mixture of emotions underlying the desire for success is often covered up -- and by that I do not mean that it is not genuine to some extent too, it is just that different currents mingle -- with the desire to help others in some way. But how much there is ego in this wish and how much you are only determined to help, only you yourselves can find out by not shirking the truth, by looking into yourselves with very sharp glasses. When you have the answer, you are already a step further. And when you are this one step further, help may be extended to you to proceed even further along in the discovery of your own soul. It is also advisable to consider the question whether it is God's plan for you also to become a success in whatever you have chosen for yourselves. His plan may be quite different for you. And I can promise you that you will only find happiness and blessing on your way, whatever you are doing, if you do what He plans with you. You can find out, you know. It is not difficult at all. Just ask God, and be in expectancy of His answer, be open for it.

And now, my friends, I leave you. There is a special blessing for each one of you and love from all your dear ones in the spirit world. And many of them are present during these lectures, not all, but some. They learn too, and they watch you. The day will come when occasionally I may give you news of some of them. They all send you love and the fervent hope that you come out of all your blindness, of your clouds and thus find truth and light and freedom. Go your way into your lives, and carry with you the blessings and the love of God. Be in peace!

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