

## THE FORCES OF ACTIVITY AND PASSIVITY -- FINDING GOD'S WILL

Greetings in the name of the Lord. I bring blessings for all of you, my friends, blessed is this hour. There are twelve basic, active forces in the universe and twelve basic, passive forces or principles. In the highest realm of light, according to the scheme of the "Pistis Sophia," these forces are concentrated and conducted by respective entities who are each a representative or a personification of each of these active and passive principles. They are all perfect in their own way. The whole universe is penetrated by these forces, and an infinite variety and combination of them is possible. Incidentally, you have heard in the "Pistis Sophia" the expression "twenty-four invisibles." This refers to these principles, as well as to these entities. They are invisible in all spheres below the one I mentioned now. But in that sphere, these principles are visible, not only the entities but also the forces. They are visible in the form of rays, fine threads running through the atmosphere. They are noticeable not only by various colors and shades but also by scent and tone and other means of perception that you do not know of as human beings.

The reason I am telling you about this is not merely to give you information about these higher spheres, for that in itself would not be sufficient reason to talk about. Interesting as this knowledge may be, it is not enough. For what you should get out of these lectures must always be of some benefit that you can use in your actual life right here and right now. Since every force or principle present in the universe also penetrates each individual human soul, you will see that a benefit can be derived from this very faraway and abstract sounding piece of information. In other words, a connection can and should be made, for the whole universe is within you.

How man uses, exploits, and directs these principles or forces determines his life, his harmony, and his happiness. I have often mentioned activity and passivity are two basic divine aspects in the universe. There is, as you can now see, not only one active and one passive principle in existence, but twelve of each. The question arises for man, in what instance should he assume an active and when a passive attitude: when to use your own free will for activity and when to use your free will for passivity, so that God's will can be fulfilled. That is, you think about it in these terms, but here lies a fundamental falsity, my friends. For it is not in the least true that you can be passive when you want to fulfill God's will. Truly, in order to fulfill the will of God, it needs a great deal of activity and will power.

When the active forces are used in the channels destined for the passive currents, there occurs a congestion, and the result is a frustration for the human being. On the other hand, if the passive forces replace the active ones, entering the channels where the active principle should work and flow freely, there will not be a congestion, but a standstill or a stagnation, not only in general development, which, of course, the wrong use of the active forces brings about too, but a sluggishness in certain particular respects in the human soul that gradually affects the entire inner make-up of the person in question.

Particularly the person who is on the path has great need to find out in what respect the forces should be active and in what respect passive. And there I will help you and try to shed a little light on this subject. From there on, you will also understand that there is no passivity involved to fulfill the will of God. When you should be active and use your will power, which does not mean self-will -- these are two different things -- but where your will power must be used, is at all times to adhere to the laws of God which you know. And that is not so difficult to find out even for people who do not have this personal guidance and these particular teachings as you receive them here -- even for people who find God in any of the currently existing religions or philosophies and, yes, even for people who are not particularly close to God, who may be agnostics or even atheists but who have high standards of ethics and morals. They do know what is right and what is wrong if they simply face the particular issue in question and ask themselves honest and self-probing questions. Then they will know. In order to do just that, you certainly do need your will power.

But where the passive forces have to set in, where they are unfortunately, often replaced by your active forces, these are all instances where you cannot change circumstances or other people. Man is inclined to revolt within when things do not go according to his will, when other people are wrong. There is then an activity. Whenever an emotion is felt and you follow that emotion through to its roots, you will discover that there is a desire in back of it. Desire means activity. You may have right desires: going on the path of purification, for instance, or learning love, or overcoming your weaknesses, or using self-honesty, which is a pain at the beginning. All these are positive, constructive desires, and therefore the active force must be put in use in order to fulfill them. But there are also negative desires. Whenever resentment, fear, hatred, and so on, are in your heart, there is a negative desire, and therefore an active force is used instead of a passive one. Since a wrong desire cannot really be fulfilled -- if it appears to be fulfilled, it is very temporary and illusory -- you become frustrated. Speaking practically, what must your attitude be like in those instances when you are supposed to be passive? You cannot change this world or other people, my friends. In your intellect, you may know that very well indeed, but do your emotions always know it? Certainly not! It remains to be seen by yourselves whether your emotions will begin to follow what you know in your intellect. So the proper attitude would be in those instances to accept what you cannot change: the actions and attitudes of other people and circumstances outside your control. If you can accept these really and truly in your emotions as well as in your superficial knowledge, then and then only will you rechannel the wrongly used active and passive currents. It means also to accept the imperfection of this earth sphere in humility, knowing that since you are not perfect, you cannot, must not resent other's imperfections even though they may be different than your own. It even means to accept your own imperfections, which does not mean that you should want to remain that way. It merely means that you have to accept them for now, accept that they actually do exist. As of now, you possess so many imperfections that you have not accepted as yet. In a way not quite consciously, you revolt against this state of affairs, and by revolting, you set an active force in motion where a passive one should exist. Only after this passive force has been cultivated, then a different active current has to be brought to work so as to gradually begin to overcome this imperfection. But as long as you revolt against things that cannot be changed -- or could only be changed by a different inner activity -- there is a pressure and an inner pushing against a stonewall. As long as you do not relinquish or relax this pushing force in the wrong direction, you cannot make order in your soul. You must learn to recognize where your desires surge into wrong directions. If the pressure is taken off these wrong desires, you will have that much more strength left for the good and proper desires where active force is badly needed but where you are presently too weak.

Why? -- not because less strength has been given to you than to other people, but because you have not managed your household well. You have allowed a disorder, disorganization, and mismanagement to set in. There is just the right and necessary amount of strength available for you in order to fulfill your life as well as possible. It is up to you to use this strength properly and not to waste it.

And do not believe for one moment that those people who appear weak and without will on the surface are the ones who use less active force than the obviously strong-willed and self-willed ones. It is often the contrary. The former simply do not display their will on the surface because of other conflicting psychological trends. But within, everything sizzles because of this frustrated will, for it presses in the wrong direction. Such persons may not be consciously aware of it, but the symptoms must show by their health, their strength, and their peace of mind. The moment you become actually passive where passive you should be -- not in your thoughts alone, in not deceiving yourself, but in your innermost emotions -- when you accept that which you cannot change now by direct action immediately, and stop pressing with your will, you will have new strength and life force that you have not known before.

So far, this may still sound confusing to you, my friends, because you may not know how to find out how you really feel within, how to begin. It is not half as difficult as you may think. The fundamental factor in this is, of course, again to get to know yourself, to ask yourself pertinent questions. And this is really very simple once you decide for its unavoidable necessity. Each time you feel an unpleasant emotion, anger, anxiety, resentment, or whatever it may be -- and your days are often full of it -- stop rationalizing it away by thinking of the wrongs of others involved. Instead, ask yourself what you really want, because there is something you want the moment there is emotion in you. Otherwise you would not feel that way. With this, I certainly do not say that all emotions are wrong, but unpleasant emotions must have somewhere a faulty premise no matter how wrong others may be. This faulty premise is, as explained, often an active pressure where acceptance should reign. So find out this pressure, this desire, and examine it from this point of view. It does take training and habit forming to observe yourself from this point of view so that you think about it in this way. But how beneficial this is for you! Once you begin and do not let up, you will see that it becomes second nature with you. It becomes a good habit without which you could not and should not want to live anymore. It is part of the daily cleansing of the soul. Before you start in this way, you are often constantly in an emotion about its nature. You are not clear, and you do not realize what is going on in you, what your desires are. But once you begin to focus your attention on these feelings from this point of view, what is the desire behind it, it becomes very simple, indeed. And that, of course, is the purpose of the daily review I mention so often. But if some of you cannot or do not like to do it in this form, there are other ways of doing it. Whenever you have a free moment, think about the past few hours, and think what your feelings actually were during these past few hours or at any particular experience. And then ask yourself concerning your respective emotions: "What is my desire?" And when you find the answer, you will already have a clue. The answer will often be that another person has done something that is wrong or that seems wrong to you. There you can actually observe, close at hand, that where you should be passive, you are active because you actively desire a change that you cannot control. And by these constant overactive desires in the wrong place, you completely forget those instances where you have the power to change if you only look at it. For there is so much power given to you! To each one of you! Yet, you do not realize it. Why? -- because you constantly waste your power in the wrong channels. You use them up unproductively. You often create a short circuit within you, stemming from conflicting

desires. For if you learn to examine yourself in this manner, you will not only find that there are so many wrong and unfulfillable desires in you as such, but also conflicting desires. You wish at one and the same time two impossible things. The point is simply that you have to become aware of this paradoxical state of affairs within you. And the only way you can do so is by any type of daily review you conduct, by this self-honesty, by examining your feelings and the desires behind them. That is the process of maturity, my friends, because your unconscious, often conflicting desires are always immature. They desire often the impossible, as a child does frequently, desiring something that cannot be had or desiring something for which you are not prepared to pay the price. The fact that you do not consider the problem from this angle and are therefore unaware that there is a price to be paid for each desired gratification does not alter the circumstances in the least. Because of your unwillingness to pay the necessary price for a desired goal, you leave the issue in the unconscious, thus thinking childishly you can get around it. It is uncomfortable for you to realize and obey the laws of justice, so you leave it in the unconscious and thus make yourself ill, not only physically but on all levels of your existence. So, my dear, dear friends, try to observe yourselves from this point of view -- what your desires really are. And then when you make these findings, you will be surprised how much relief already this knowledge will bring you if you have really embraced to do so, wholeheartedly decided to do so without subterfuges, without any halfheartedness about it. You will be relieved by the mere knowledge, for that will explain to you the mishaps of your life, and that will strengthen your trust in God's justice and wonderful order of the universe. God does not want you to be a puppet, to be dependent on a wrong divine conception in which you hold on to God's apron strings, expecting Him to run your life for you and then if your life is not what you want it to be, blaming Him in some hidden way for it. He wants you independent and strong, which you can only be by being the way I am showing you here. You can conduct your life satisfactorily, but He will not do it for you, He will let you run your life, and if it becomes a mess, then you must change, never others or circumstances. But you can even control circumstances -- and other people, the moment you start your wrong overactive currents to become passive and the wrong passive currents to become active. For that will emanate from you and indirectly affect the subconscious of other people. And that will come back to you, gradually.

Now the question what is the will of God for you still remains open. I have said to you it is not only wrong to believe that you have to be passive in order to fulfill God's will, but it is impossible to be passive and without will to do so because to fulfill the will of God means overcoming your own inner resistances. And for that you do need activity, although carried over into another channel, on different tracks, so to speak, but activity and strength of will power nevertheless. The passivity is necessary but certainly not in order to fulfill God's will. You confuse activity with self-will. First of all, let us determine clearly what is self-will in comparison with free will. Self-will is the will of the little ego. Free will comprises everything; you can use free will for good or bad. That is up to you. To agree on the terminology so as not to invite any misunderstandings, self-will is the little blind ego, the will of the lower self.

Now, in order to find out what is God's will, you must certainly be free of self-will, but your active and clean will power must be used -- first to desire to really find out God's will without wishful thinking and self-deception; then to leave your self-will aside; and then to prepare to put your will power even more actively in use after you have found out God's will, so as to be able to follow it through. To determine what this will of God is in individual instances, you very rarely need a particular revelation, a transcendence from the supernatural. God's will is always contained within you and behind your blindnesses. The moment you take off your masks -- your rose-colored glasses

you are using when you view your own self, your motives, and your life -- God's will must evolve clearly and without a doubt when you discover your real desires and put them down black on white and say to yourself, "This is what I actually want when I am honest with myself." And you may often be surprised how this wanting deviates from your conscious desires. You should not believe because another part in you conflicts with your conscious desires that you are entirely despicable. No, you should know that you consist of many layers: the higher self and the lower self broadly speaking. Accept that both are in you, and all will be well. Then you will not lose proportions in your estimate of yourself, neither in one exaggerated direction nor in the other. Now the moment you do examine the desire of your lower self and then bring this into your consciousness -- do not allow it to slip away again into unconsciousness -- and consider the repercussions, the meaning, the significance, and the consequences, and compare it with the spiritual laws as far as you know them; then you will be able to know quite clearly what is God's will in nine out of ten cases. I can promise you that. It is only a matter of examining the various chain reactions that led you to the present state. For if you are in a certain situation now and you want to change this situation, or you are in front of a decision and you do not know what this decision should be, of course you will not know what God's will is if you merely let it go at that. But the moment you ask more penetrating questions of yourself, of these underlying desires that may perhaps be responsible for certain conditions in your presence, then the answer must evolve clearly, strongly, and self-evidently. And it will evolve all the quicker and better if you enlist God's help for this purpose, because God never gives any help of this sort if you have not made the first step. And the first step is always your endeavors in self-knowledge, self-honesty, and your sincere good will of purification and doing God's will in all instances. There must be a wise and mature attitude, of course -- not believing that you can change from one day to another and without effort on your part. The main thing is that if your present situation is unsatisfactory in any way or if you are not clear about a decision you are called upon to make, that you do not expect God to decide for you or to alter an unpleasantness for you without your active participation in this process, realizing that there must be something wrong in you to begin with and being willing to find this out and change it. Do not forget this wrong is not necessarily a sinful action or thought, but an unrecognized emotion that surges in a wrong channel or violates a spiritual law. If God recognizes this good will of yours, if you thus combine prayer with the work you are willing to undertake in self-examination and tearing down your masks, His answer will become forever more clear so that no possible doubt will have a place in you. But as long as the resistance against this procedure, no matter what the pretexts and excuses are, as long as this sluggishness and the immaturity of your lower self has the better of you, you will have wrong reactions, wrong instincts which you will want to interpret to fit the resistance of your lower self. The only way you can positively know whether a right and good or a wrong and false instinct guides you is by the happiness, relief, and freedom, the sense of utter rightness and peace with the world that you have as a result of it -- or the opposite of these feelings. Only if your will is really free of self-pampering, pure and humble, can God's will clearly manifest, no matter how He chooses to reveal Himself to you. But as I said, in many instances, you will not need a particular revelation, but with your good efforts and God's help enlisted in prayer, you will find out the answer yourself. God will only help you through His angels so that you can do it better, so that you have more support from the spirit world, more guidance and more help. But you must be the one to decide "I want to do it wholeheartedly." Then God will help you. Then there will be no problem with what God's will is for you. The answer and the key is within you. It lies in your imperfections; it lies wherever you have deviated or broken a spiritual law, be it merely in your unconscious desire-currents. And then by itself, almost automatically, the active forces will function properly and flow into the right channels, and so will the passive forces. Yes, my friends, this change will and must happen. It

cannot be otherwise. And that, of course, will change your entire life for the better. Is there anyone who wants to ask a question pertaining to this subject before we turn to the other questions?

QUESTION: Why are desires always from the lower self?

ANSWER: I certainly did not say that. On the contrary, I have shown clearly that there are also proper and very important constructive desires.

QUESTION: Maybe I misunderstood.

ANSWER: You overheard it. You will see when you read this lecture.

QUESTION: But how can we tell if a desire comes from the higher or the lower self?

ANSWER: Well, by examining the desires and their real motives. Very clearly and very concisely ask yourself the question: "What is it I want, and why do I want such and such? What is my real motive behind it?" You see, it is very often this way too: you may have a right desire with a good motive behind, but at the same time there is also, notwithstanding the good motive, an impure motive in it as well. The moment you recognize this, you already have done something for your purification. Purifying does not merely mean that you are already perfect, but the process of becoming perfect is already purification. It is an integral part of this process in saying, "In addition to my good motive there is also a selfish or vain motive hidden under this good cause." By being able to say this to yourself, you have already purified yourself to some extent. I will give an example. A person may be spiritually very active and have clean and pure motives to help other people, for instance. These good motives exist indubitably. Yet at the same time, the desire-current of the lower self mingles in, perhaps the ego, a vanity to be outstanding, to be admired, to be an authority. The moment the mixture of the motives is recognized, calmly and freely, that is already a purification process. With such an act, you have already raised your consciousness to a pretty high degree. Merely with the recognition of it, even if you are as yet incapable of shedding off the impure motives, something in the chemistry of your body and soul begins to change with such clear self-recognition because you approach truth! The most severe and frequent violation of spiritual law that is mostly overlooked by human beings is living in truth. You all imagine, when I say that, that I mean you should not lie. I do not mean that at all. It is self-understood that a person should be honest, should not lie. But lying to oneself is often infinitely more dangerous and harmful than lying to others. Why do I say more dangerous? Because when you lie to others, at least you are aware of it, you know it. Thus you are a step nearer in truth than when you lie to yourself. When you lie to yourself, you do not realize it, not because you cannot, but because you do not want to! So you are completely away from truth. And that is a very grave violation that sets you apart from God, that inflicts you with a dark wall behind which you must be unhappy, quite apart of the outer conflicts this must create for you sooner or later. Behind this wall you are lonely and lost. The only way you can find into the light is tearing down these walls and viewing what is behind even if it is unpleasant. The first moment of doing that is a fight, but after you have decided to do so, after you have torn down the first few stones of this wall, the relief will be tremendous for you. And for the first time, you will really know what it means to be on this path. You will know that this manner of work, and nothing else, counts in the last analysis, my friends.

I am trying to make you understand that you are not unfree creatures if you decide to want to fulfill the will of God. Quite on the contrary, for it needs the greatest and freest efforts of will power to decide to live within the law. In order to do that, as I have explained again and again, it is necessary to recognize your innermost motives and hidden currents. Only a free person can do that. On the other hand, if people constantly decide to use their little self-will, they become more and more bound and chained. For the more you live in divine law, the freer you must become. The more you break divine law, the more enslaved you must become. A person who does not recognize his own hidden motives cannot conduct his life freely anymore. He is completely enslaved to his lower self, to his unrecognized desires which push and pull the person backward and forward, left and right.

QUESTION: Does that mean, whatever we want to do, we always have to ask God, "Is this thy will?" Or do you have to see whether it does not deviate from God's law?

ANSWER: I would suggest it should be done this way. In the first place, when you are on this path, you begin to make an inventory about your own person, as I have often suggested -- not only finding your faults and your qualities and virtues, in other words what you are, but also what you want, what your desires really are. And when you have done that, and you begin this constant process of self-analysis of your feelings every day, then you will automatically get to know after a while in what respect you have obviously deviated from divine law in your emotional currents. You will sometimes know at once when you discover the nature of a thus far hidden desire, that this is contrary to God's will, even without any special metaphysical knowledge. In other cases, you may have to probe a little deeper and separate the clean motive from the impure one of the same desire-current. Seldom can you find an answer by viewing the issue at stake by asking yourself whether the action you contemplate is right or wrong. None of you would ever consider to commit an antisocial or sinful act. The decisions you are faced with could therefore in principle be right either way. Yet, for each individual there is always only one right way and many, many wrong ways possible. So you have to consider your real and honest motives behind the apparent good motives. That determines the right or wrong action for you, not the ethical value of the action itself. As long as you have not found all the motives of a respective desire, you will not be able to know the right action for you. The right procedure is not to ask God simply to let you know whether to do such and such, thus avoiding the efforts and work of self-knowledge on your part -- there may be isolated instances where this can be the right thing to do, but not in general, not when there seems to be a pattern and a conflict involved -- but the right procedure is to decide wholeheartedly that you wish to find the motives behind the motive, and for that you should pray for God's help. Then He will help you. Is that clear?

So the question remains: find out your real motives, which does not mean that the motive which is on the surface is annulled. But the other part that mixes in has to be found out, and then you will have the answers.

There is one more thing I would like to say to you before we turn to your general questions, since we are at that subject. There is the outer will and the inner will. By the latter, I do not only mean the subconscious will. The inner will, that I mean, can be made conscious comparatively easily. I have often given you the advice that you listen within you where your solar plexus or the spiritual field is. You may receive answers there. You may feel right or wrong from this part of yourself, provided that you have once wholeheartedly decided for the right course and the resistance

and fight is over and done with. If you become very quiet and relaxed and listen within you, you may find that there is another will coming from there, or the lack of it for that matter. This will or its lack is often conflicting with your outer or conscious will. To give an example, let us suppose a person sincerely desires to love a fellow creature of his. He desires so because he knows it is right. This desire is in the outer will. If he becomes quiet and consults the inner will, he will find out that the inner will does not conform with that. To find out such a discrepancy is extremely important, for how can you control yourself if you do not know what is within you. And by controlling oneself, I certainly do not mean suppressing anything, but rather holding life's reins firmly in one's hands. How can you cure a wrong current if you do not discover it first? Another example -- I will choose a positive one this time -- is if it is right, the inner will exists very quietly from deep within, yet it is conscious. Now, if a person desires to do his best, to fulfill his task as well as he is able to or to overcome his faults as well as he can at this present stage, the inner will should be directed towards that end without pressure, without haste. But the outer will does not press but is relaxed. A pressure in the outer will must make the person tense and will only delay the process. The inner will must be there for the right thing and the ultimate goal. The outer will must be serene and give leeway for life's hindrances and imperfections that make it impossible to proceed speedily and according to a certain plan. On the contrary, the apparent obstacles should be met voluntarily as a means of growing faster, of learning to accept that which cannot be altered by the self, as a means of learning humility and so on. Then the obstacles will cease to be obstacles but will become steppingstones upwards. The outer will must be flexible; it must be prepared for change. One time it has to be more active to act, at other times it has to become more passive. The inner will has to be active but quiet, as the whole foundation of the person's life. To understand these words truly, you would have to meditate about them deeply and perhaps quite often. And now we turn to your other questions.

QUESTION: In the case of war, is the act of killing by a soldier contrary to divine law?

ANSWER: No, it is not. For, as Jesus Christ has said, man should give God His due and Caesar that which is due him. If human beings on this whole earth sphere are still so far back in development that a war is necessary, a man has to fight for his country. By refusing to fight, even if all men would do so, evil would not be eliminated. War may be temporarily eliminated, but certainly not evil. War is only one of many expressions of evil. War is not the cause, it is only an effect. It would be the same if a father would allow a murderer to come into his house and kill his wife and children without defending them. He must defend those he loves, and evil has to be fought against. In your present state of development, unfortunately war often is still your means of fighting evil. As spiritual development grows, you will learn to go more to the roots of the problems and fight against evil in better ways. As it stands now, mankind is often forced to fight in war against forces that abuse free will and divine law. If people exist who take the power upon themselves to prevent other people to live as God wants them to live and if your world has not found other means as yet to eliminate this wrong, then a war is the lesser evil. From the spiritual point of view, you know that death is not the worst. Spiritual death is the worst, not physical death. Every person is judged individually, and that comprises also the circumstances and environment in which he lives. In the spirit world, the real motives count more than an act, and judgment is not passed generally or collectively. Each person is judged separately, and if a man simply goes to war to defend his country, this will not count against him. His inner attitudes count, his feelings, his reactions, his decency in motives, and his sense of responsibility.

QUESTION: How does spiritual law correspond with human laws in case of a death sentence with a murderer?

ANSWER: From the spiritual point of view, capital punishment is wrong. That may sound like a contradiction to you in comparison with the last answer. But it is not. In the case of war, it is a question of defending a nation, mankind. For humanity, war is often the last means. And even the people living in the aggressive nation are often convinced that they are doing their duty; they do not see the whole picture. They have to abide by the laws of their society. Otherwise they might cause more hardship, not only to themselves and thereby becoming incapable of fulfilling their life, but also to others around them. Again we cannot generalize all the way, for there may be isolated instances where it is the duty of a person to violate a law of man in order to fulfill a law of God. But these instances are rare and only expected of strong and highly developed beings sent to earth with a special mission. But in general, this does not hold true. But capital punishment is not a necessity. War often is in your present state of development. You have not found the way yet to eliminate war. The only way to do so is when resentment, hate, and fear do not live in the individuals' soul anymore. This is the only basis for peace. But capital punishment is not necessary.

QUESTION: You said in my private session to bring up this question: what are the various aspects of love?

ANSWER: There are many, and I cannot attempt to go into all of them. I will just name a few: compassion, pity -- and that is not the same thing -- respect, admiration, tenderness, protectiveness, helpfulness, kindness, truth. Yes, my friends, without truth, there can be no love! This will suffice for the moment.

QUESTION: In connection with something important that you have told me in my private sessions, I would like to ask you whether you can see now and tell me whether a certain phenomena and event has actually taken place or am I imagining it?

ANSWER: I will need a little time...it has taken place.

QUESTION: My question was somewhat answered by your lecture concerning the seeming conflict that one encounters in what you think of as your field of work and trying to reconcile it with spiritual development. But there is one question. A seeming unproductivity in your life, is that possibly a stage or an indication that you are aimed in the wrong direction?

ANSWER: It might be either. But it often is an indication that you are in the wrong direction. It might also be in certain circumstances that your will is counteracted by certain subconscious conflicting desires or fear. As long as this is not brought into consciousness, you cannot treat it or handle it properly. So the only course to take is the one I advocate. Of course I am speaking generally, I have no right to give you the answer. It would weaken you. It will serve your development to find out for yourself. And you can quite easily with what I am teaching you. Actually, the two alternatives you mentioned form a whole. As long as there is conflict within you about a direction of your life, you cannot be successful in the field you have chosen. You can only be successful in anything when there is no conflict within you. And automatically, when you have solved the conflict of your desires, the conscious with the unconscious one, you will find out what the right direction is for you. Then desires may change. Find out the real motives behind your

present desires, and find out that which holds you back, a fear or a desire not to want to pay the price wholeheartedly -- which is not necessarily bad, it may be good. For spiritually speaking, the price is sometimes too high to be worthwhile. Sometimes it is the lower self that prevents a success in a certain direction, and sometimes it is the higher self which recognizes that this is not good. So it prevents you from a success. The only way you can find the answers, is testing your own motives without any self-pampering or sensitivity for your ego, with utter and shattering self-honesty. That is the only procedure that I cannot advise strongly enough, even at the chance of boring you, my friends.

QUESTION: When you say an incarnation has taken place in a certain country, does that necessarily mean where a person has been born, even if it has only been for a very short time, or where he has spent most of his life?

ANSWER: Most of his life. It would be where your roots are, it would be the country that you consider your home. If there are several countries in the course of a lifetime, they would also be mentioned. But if you live only permanently in one country, it is that country that counts -- where you have made your connections, your ties, your karmic links.

QUESTION: This does not correspond to astrology?

ANSWER: In astrology, it is different because the astrological chart has to be figured according to the geographical part of the world. That is something different.

QUESTION: A question in connection with war and killing, how are we to regard a conscientious objector who sincerely follows the admonition not to kill and considers the whole of the universe as his fellow men rather than the part he is called upon to so-called "defend."

ANSWER: In the first place, man is not defending a part of geography but his immediate fellow creatures. By refusing to go to war, he may in the long run cause more harm than good. With this, I certainly do not wish to give the impression that I advocate war -- by no means. But war cannot be eliminated by refusing it. This cancer has to be treated in another way and slowly has to grow out of all individuals. An individual conscientious objector, provided his motives are pure, will be judged accordingly. Then this will certainly not be held against him the same as a killing in a war by a soldier will not be held against him, if his heart is pure, his conviction sincere. But that does not alter the fact that his judgment is wrong. More precisely, his goal or endeavor is a good one just as the goal of a sincere soldier may be a good one, but he selects the wrong means to oust an evil. Refusing to go to war could not be the right curative against war. For as long as there is hatred within the individual soul and as long as there is blindness caused through lack of self-knowledge and as long as people do not purify themselves and strive upwards to God -- and the only striving that counts is this purification process -- and as long as people cannot refine their feelings, then there cannot be peace. It is impossible. War is an outpicturing of what goes on in so many individual personalities. It cannot be eliminated by collective means alone unless these are supported by the right spiritual attitudes, as well meant as they may be. It has to start from within by each individual. Otherwise you will only succeed to eliminate one effect, and another symptom will come. It is just the same with disease, my friends. War is nothing else but a disease. Your human history, your human science shows you how much medicine has found in eliminating diseases. Many diseases are not possible anymore today that existed a relatively very short time ago.

But other diseases have sprung up that you cannot cure, and will continue to do so until a greater degree of purification exists on this earth no matter what wonderful progress science and medicine make. As long as the disease is not cured from within, war or any other disease will exist. If it is not war, it will be something else, equally terrible. In the case of an individual, it is possible to make a mistake in judgment, and this in itself is not held against you. You all make mistakes in judgment. As long as you are sincere and do not delude yourself for other reasons and color your motives, it is something that is not held against you. But the coloring of one's own motives so often exists. When man has an opinion, a very firm opinion about anything -- religion, politics, any subject -- the moment this opinion is very firm, fanatical, and inflexible, he should test his real inner motives, and he may find out that this opinion is not as general and objective as he may have thought at first. If you really dig deep and honestly, you will be surprised how often you will find a personal, emotional, and subjective reason connected with your convictions.

QUESTION: What is the opposite aspect of vanity?

ANSWER: Love and humility. For if you are vain, you want to place your ego in the first row. You want admiration -- I am not speaking personally now -- you want to be more than the other person.

A., you may ask your question the next time first, since there is no more time tonight.

So my friends, God's blessing is given to you. God's love is streaming to you. May the words I have given you bear fruits and help you on your path and strengthen you. Be in peace, be in love, be in God!

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