

THE VICIOUS CIRCLE

Greetings, my dearest friends. God bless this gathering. God bless all of you.

Tonight, I shall discuss one of the vicious circles that is very common among human beings. To some degree it exists in every human soul. Most of the time, it operates in the subconscious although some parts of this circle may be in the conscious mind. Yet it is important in this work that you follow this circle through until you uncover its entirety. For, otherwise, you cannot dissolve it. My words are not addressed so much to your conscious mind, nor to your intellect, but to the level of your emotions where the feelings and reactions of this vicious circle exist.

You are probably aware of segments of this vicious circle; so use these words to follow through to those parts that you are still unaware of. Perhaps a few among you are utterly unaware of any part of this circle. In that case and to begin with, these words will guide you to make at least one part conscious. This will not be too difficult because many of your symptoms will easily show you that, unconsciously, this circle lives within your self. Do not, however, interpret these words as meaning you consciously think and react according to this vicious circle. Realize that it is something hidden, and it is up to you to make this chain reaction a conscious part of your work on this path of self-finding and development. The consciousness of these hidden currents will give you freedom and victory.

Most of my friends realize that an illogical way of thinking, feeling, and reacting exists in every personality even though consciously he may know better. Everything in the unconscious is primitive, ignorant, and very often illogical although these unconscious reactions do pursue a certain limited logic of their own.

This vicious circle begins in childhood, just as all images are formed in this early period. The child is helpless. It needs to be taken care of. It cannot stand on its own feet. It cannot make mature decisions. It cannot be free of weak, selfish motives and therefore be independent of other human beings. Hence, the child is incapable of unselfish love. The adult and mature person grows into such love, provided the whole personality matures harmoniously and provided that none of these childish reactions, because of wrong conclusions, remain hidden in the unconscious mind. In such a case, the personality will grow only in part while another part (and a very important one at that) will remain immature. There are only a few adults who are as mature emotionally as they are intellectually.

The child desires to be loved; in fact, it needs to be loved. If an adult existed who is able to give a semblance of divine love, the conflict we are discussing here would not arise, but the inner problems of such an entity would never be solved. For nothing can really be solved by what another person can or cannot do! Hence life on this imperfect and unpurified planet is necessary for every

soul who is not yet pure. Thus the child comes into contact with more or less imperfect surroundings which bring its inner problems to the fore. The lack of divine love, the limited human love does it. Due to this lack, the child (in its ignorance) craves for an exclusive love that is neither divine nor humanly possible. The love it wants is selfish. It does not want to share it with others, with its brothers or sisters. It does not even want to share this love with the other parent. He is often unconsciously jealous of both parents. And if the parents do not love each other, the child suffers even more. So the first conflict arises out of two opposite desires: on one hand, the child wants the love of each parent exclusively; on the other, it suffers if the parents do not love each other. Due to the lack of perfection in the love capacity of any parent, the child misunderstands that in spite of this imperfection, many a parent is still fully capable of loving more than one person. Thus the child interprets in such a way that it feels excluded and rejected if the parent also loves others. In short, the love the child craves for can never be gratified. Furthermore, whenever the child is kept from having its will done, it serves as additional "proof" that it is not sufficiently loved.

This causes frustration and the child feels rejected. This in turn causes hatred, resentment, hostility, aggression. This is the second part of the vicious circle. The need for love which cannot be gratified causes hatred and hostility towards the very people one loves most. Generally speaking, this is the second conflict of the growing human being. If the child could hate someone he does not love or if he could love someone in his own way and from whom he would desire no love in return, this conflict could not arise. It is the very fact that hatred exists for the same person whom one loves dearly which creates an important conflict in the human psyche. It is evident that the child feels ashamed of these negative emotions; therefore it puts this conflict into the subconscious where it festers. And this hatred causes a guilt feeling because the child is taught early that it is bad, wrong, and sinful to hate, particularly one's parents whom one is supposed to love and honor. It is this guilt feeling (living on and on and on in the subconscious) which, in the adult personality, causes all sorts of inner and outer conflicts. Moreover, the person is unaware of the roots of these conflicts until he decides to find out what is hidden in his subconscious.

This guilt has a further, again inevitable, reaction. By feeling guilty, the unconscious says "I desire to be punished," and thus a fear of punishment arises in the soul, which, again, is almost always entirely unconscious. The manifestations however, can be found in various symptoms which, if followed through, will finally lead to the part of the chain reactions I describe here.

Out of this fear of punishment, a further reaction sets in. It brings in its wake a feeling that whenever one is happy and enjoys pleasure, in spite of this natural longing, he does not deserve it. His guilt of hating those he loves most convinces him that he is undeserving of anything good, joyful, pleasurable, let alone happiness as such. He feels that if he were ever to become happy, the punishment, which seems inevitable, would be that much greater. Therefore he unconsciously avoids happiness, thinking to atone in this way and thus avoid even greater punishment. Hence, situations and patterns are created which always seem to destroy all that he wishes most dearly in life.

It is this fear of happiness which leads the person to all sorts of unhealthy reactions, symptoms, endeavors, directions of emotions and even deeds which, indirectly, create these patterns that look as though they happen without volition of the personality. They appear to be caused quite independently and without the personality being responsible for them at all. Thus a further conflict has come into existence. On one hand, the personality yearns for happiness and fulfillment; on the

other, a fear of happiness prohibits it. The desire for happiness can never be eradicated. And yet, with this deeply hidden guilt-feeling, the greater the desire for happiness, the guiltier does the person feel. Many personal as well as mass image impressions are gathered along the way. They all help to fortify this chain reaction.

Now, the fear of being punished and the fear of not deserving happiness create a further and more complicated reaction. The unconscious mind thinks: "I am afraid to be punished by others although I know I deserve it. It is much worse to be punished by others. Then I am really at the mercy of others, be it people, the fates, God, life itself! But perhaps if I punish myself, I can at least avoid the humiliation, the helplessness, the degradation of punishment by forces outside of myself." And since these basic conflicts of love and hatred, of guilt and fear of punishment exist in every human personality -- only the degree may vary! -- the compulsive desire for self-punishment (due to wrong and ignorant conclusions) exists to some degree in each human being.

Thus the personality inflicts punishment on itself. It may happen in various ways. It may happen by physical disease which the psyche produces. It may happen by various mishaps, difficulties, failures, conflicts in any area of life. In each individual case, the area depends on the personal image the child has formed and carries with him during his lifetime -- until found and eventually dissolved. Thus if an image exists, for instance, with regard to profession and career, it will be fortified by this inherent desire for self-punishment so that difficulties in this respect will constantly arise in the person's life. If an image exists with regard to love and marital life, for instance, the same holds true there.

Hence, if and when you do not succeed in a conscious and legitimate desire, if you find the pattern in your life that fulfillment of this conscious desire was constantly frustrated -- as though you had nothing to do with it, as though an unkind fate befell you -- you can be sure that not only an image and a wrong conclusion regarding this subject exist within yourself, but also, in addition, the need for self-punishment enters into it.

A further chain reaction in this vicious circle is the following: the personality's split in desire-currents (between love and hate that started this vicious circle) causes further splits, as you can see quite clearly by now. One of these conflicting feelings is the need for self-punishment, yet on the other hand, one does not wish it. Therefore, there is one hidden part arguing: "Perhaps I can get around it. Perhaps I can atone for my great guilt of hating in another way." This imaginary atonement amounts to a kind of bargaining. One does so by setting up for oneself such a high standard that it becomes impossible to live up to it in reality. This little inner voice argues: "If I am so perfect, if I have no fault and no weakness, if I am the best in everything I undertake, then I can make good for this past hatred and resentment." And since this little voice was hidden in the unconscious, it is not past. It is still living in the present.

You can only get over something if you air it out. Thus the same "old" hatred still lingers on in you. That is also why you constantly feel guilty. If it were really a matter of the past, you would not feel this acute guilt all the time even though this guilt feeling is of course not conscious. And you think that by being "so perfect," you may avoid punishment. In this way, a second conscience has been created. One conscience exists always; it is the higher self which is eternal and indestructible. It is each human being's divine spark. Do not confuse this conscience with the "second conscience" that has been artificially created out of the compulsion to atone for a supposed

sin or even for a real failing. Neither imaginary sins nor real failings can be atoned by this artificial, overdemanding conscience. None need be punished. As you all know by now, the way to eliminate real failings is a very different and much more constructive way. If and when you finally differentiate between these two kinds of conscience, you will have made a major step forward.

The good and pure, the divine, conscience is of course concerned with your progress, with your spiritual development, with the fulfillment of your personal life -- and with your personal law! When I say personal law, this should not be misunderstood. It is not meant in the sense of self-willed, primitive, undeveloped, and antisocial people living in a fortress of separation, sometimes wishing to live by their own "law" of selfishness. Those individuals disregard not only the law of their government, but also the divine law. The personal law I make reference to is part of divine law; it always remains within its framework and never contradicts it. Yet every child of God is different, different in development, different in character and in temperament, and has different qualities and shortcomings. Therefore every human being needs something different for each life, oftentimes also something different for each period of one and the same life. What applies to one does not necessarily apply to another. The divine law is wide and very flexible. It knows none of the rigidities and generalizations of the human misinterpretation of divine law. This divine law may close in an individual so that he feels acutely what is expected of him, what he consciously thinks to be the right thing to do, which in turn oppresses him. It may be that his selfish instincts are still so strong that his real and divine conscience has a reverse effect upon him. But it may also be that his divine conscience leads him to his personal and individual life plan. Thus it may be that your surroundings and your environment want you to do something which in itself is right, and yet that may not be the right thing for you. What your real conscience wants you to do may offhand appear contrary to the ethical and moral law of your environment. This may sound strange to you; yet when you think deeper it is not so strange. Your divine conscience will never be at variance with divine ethics and morals, so to speak. Hence, if you have the courage and independence to think through what these outer morals are, you will find that in many cases they may conform with divine law while in some instances they may not. Sometimes they are rigid and senseless. By adhering to them, you may inflict more hurt on others and yourself than by following your own personal, divine law. Divine law is always determined most and foremost by not hurting others. There may be situations in your life when it is inevitable to hurt others. These are due to your former ignorance. In such instances, it will be a question of deliberating and careful weighing and of asking God for enlightenment as to which decision will bring the least hurt all around. As you will hear the voice of your divine conscience, it will give you peace and freedom. Let me emphasize again: your personal law and plan can never be immoral or unethical in reality. At times it may appear so from the point of view of human, rigid standards which always tend to go by the letter and not by deep meaning. Rigid standards of humanity must, by their very nature of rigidity, often be undivine and compulsive in the same sense as your second, artificial conscience is. For, what lives in the individual always lives as well in humanity as a whole.

Only by deeply feeling into yourself, only by complete self-honesty -- after you have learned it to some degree -- can you grasp the meaning of the true and real conscience which will guide you on the right way if you let it and if you do not let the voice of the compulsive second conscience overrule the real conscience. As and when your real conscience speaks to you, you will be liberated, my friends, whether the decision you are confronted with turns out to be what your emotions desire for the moment or what is not the fulfillment of your desires. Here lies the difficulty. It can never be generalized, and no rule can be set up. At one time, your real and divine conscience may tell you

to do what is unflattering, uncomfortable, and against your selfish desire. It is unjustified to hope that your voice warning you against it may be your compulsive conscience; for, at times, the right way may be that your real and your compulsive conscience say the same thing, only the motives may be different. At other times, your real conscience directs you towards the very thing you desire most, but you have no courage to obey it because your compulsive conscience speaks too loudly. This voice says "I am too guilty. I must not be happy. I do not deserve it." But when the voice of your divine conscience speaks to you, you must feel liberated, you must feel in complete harmony with yourself and with the world, whatever the decision, whatever the outcome, whatever the difficulties may be. Very few people can penetrate to the voice of the divine conscience at all times and consciously. They are constantly whipped by the slave driver of their compulsive conscience, which has come into existence by the chain reactions indicated.

The compulsive, second conscience puts demands on you which are impossible to fulfill. And then each time you fail to live up to these standards, you feel disproportionately dejected. And with each failure of the compulsive conscience, you feel more and more strongly that you cannot avoid punishment. You feel the need for punishment even more than before you invented this second conscience. And you say to yourself: "I am even not capable of being as good and as perfect generally with others as I am with those I hate. Therefore, I see how much I deserve to be punished and despised." The bargaining you wanted to engage in did not and could never work out. Hence the price you pay for this second conscience is high. In fact, it is much higher than the price everyone must ordinarily pay to live life healthily!

What happens when you cannot attain these goals? Inevitably the result must be a feeling of inadequacy, of inferiority. Since you did not know that the standards of your compulsive conscience are irrational, unreal, and unattainable; since you believe, in your wall of separation, that others can succeed while you alone do not; you feel completely isolated, ashamed with your guilty secret not only of hating but also of being unable to be "good" and "pure."

You may say it is right and good to become perfect. You may say "does not the divine conscience wish this perfection too?" Certainly it does. At times the divine and the compulsive conscience may strive for the same thing; however, the way it is achieved differs. The divine conscience knows you cannot be perfect yet, wants to show you step-by-step how to attain perfection by degrees, by accepting yourself as you now are without guilt and fear. The compulsive conscience does not know anything of that kind. It would be perfect already, now! Furthermore, the motives vary between these two voices. The former has time; its ultimate goal is for the purpose of loving better. It knows that the truth of perfection is the only way to give love and happiness and to become happy and be loved.

The motive of the second conscience is one of weakness and fear. It bargains. It wants to avoid what may or may not be good, healthy, and deserved (it depends how you look at "punishment"). It is too proud to realize that one simply cannot be quite perfect as yet, and also too proud to accept its current status. Therefore one must feel inferior by being unable to live up to such high standards. All inferiority feelings of human nature can always be brought to this common denominator. As long as this fact is not felt and experienced, you cannot shed inferiority feelings. You have to uncover this whole vicious circle and see its irrationality, its lack of reason. You have to live through the emotions that led you to create it. Only then will you dissolve this chain reaction point by point and create new concepts within your emotional self.

All rationalizations of inferiority feelings are never real causes. You may be right that others are more successful in one way or the other. But this could never make you feel inferior. Without the artificial high standards, you would not feel the need to be better or at least as good as others in every realm of your life. You could accept with equanimity that others are better, do better in some areas of life, while you have advantages that others may lack. You would not have to be as intelligent, as successful, as beautiful, or whatever as other people are. This never is the real reason for your feeling of inadequacy and inferiority! This truth is borne out by the fact that you see the most brilliant, the most "successful," the most beautiful people often have worse inferiority feelings than others who are less brilliant, less successful, or less beautiful.

It is this inadequacy and inferiority which furnishes the arc to close this vicious circle. And again, the unconscious little voice argues: "I have failed. I know I am inferior. But, if only I could receive -- just receive -- a measure of love, respect, and admiration from others! It would be so gratifying. It will prove to me that I was right in demanding love, and it will also prove that my hate was justified by the denial. The love denied me, forced me into the position of hating. (Note that here we come full circle.) Just to receive would also prove that it is possible to receive love, love which my parents denied me. In addition, it will show also that I am not as worthless as I suspect because of my failure to live up to the standard of my compulsive conscience."

Naturally, these words are never thought out consciously. Yet this is the way the emotions argue below the surface. Therefore as the circle closes where it started, the need to be loved becomes even more urgent than it was originally. It follows from the vicious circle that all successive relays of these chain reactions make the need stronger and stronger progressively.

On the other hand, there is always the suspicion that the hate was unjustified. It was unjustified but in a different sense. The personality in its unconscious feels that if such love exists, then he was right, and his parents and others were wrong. Thus the craving for love becomes more and more strained and tense, with the motives weak, unhealthy, and totally immature. Since this need can never be fulfilled -- and the more this becomes apparent, the more is the guilt magnified -- as a consequence, all ensuing points in the circle, going round and round, become worse and worse as life goes on, and more and more problems and conflicts are created.

Only when you desire love in a healthy and mature way -- not covering sick motives -- and only when you are willing to love to the same degree that you desire to be loved, and when you are ready to assume the "risk of life" will you find love to be forthcoming. Remember that the sick personality in which the vicious circle is strong can never do that so long as it continues to desire childish love. So long as it cannot risk anything for love, it does not know how to love maturely. The child is not supposed to take that risk, yet the adult is.

The immature person has a desire and craving for love -- out of the motives resulting from this vicious circle. He wants to be loved and cherished, cared for and admired even by those whom he himself does not intend to love in the least. And where the intention may be present to some degree, the proportions of the willingness to give and the compulsive need to receive are very uneven. Because of this basic unfairness, it cannot work. For the divine law is always just and fair. You never receive more than you invest. When you invest freely without weak and compulsive motives, you may not get the love back immediately from the same source you invested it in, but it

must eventually flow back to you, and at such time in a benign circle. What you give out will flow back, provided you do not give in weakness, in a motive of "proving something." If the motives of the limited love you give are unconsciously based on this vicious circle, you can never receive it in return even if by chance you come across a person who would basically be capable of love more mature than the love in the environment you usually attract by your hidden currents. Let us suppose, for argument's sake, that all your needs in receiving love could be gratified while you invest only a minimum of emotions. Even then, your need could never be gratified. This is because of the simple reason that your inner suffering needs a different answer! The love you crave for in the mistaken idea that this will set you right is not the answer. In other words, you look for a remedy that is no remedy for your sickness. And therefore it will remain a hunger never to be stilled. It is like a bottomless well.

Thus the circle is complete. It is your work on the path to find this circle within yourself, to experience it particularly as to where, how, and regarding whom it lives within you. All this has to become a personal experience before you can really dissolve it. If you just let this circle become an intellectual knowing without emotionally reliving it, this knowledge will not help you. I repeat: if you cannot apply these various points of chain reactions to your emotions, it will just be another piece of theoretical knowledge you have absorbed just as a lot of other knowledge living entirely separated from your emotions. Therefore, in your personal work, you have to find this circle, and then you can break it only by realizing where the wrong premises are. You will have to realize that as a child you were justified in having certain feelings, attitudes, needs, and inabilities which are now obsolete. You also have to learn to be tolerant with your negative emotions. You have to understand them. You have to discover where you deviate in your emotional tendencies, requirements, and desires from your conscious knowledge. You may know perfectly well, and even preach, that you have to give love and not be so concerned with receiving. But all of you in your emotions still deviate from this intellectual knowledge. This discrepancy has to be made fully conscious before you can hope to break this circle. Only after you have realized and fully absorbed all that, only after you have thought about the irrationality of certain of your hitherto hidden emotions, the latter will begin to change slowly, gradually, and by not expecting them to change the very moment you understood their lack of reason, but by giving them leeway, by realizing that they are habit-bound. If you discover their wrong trends again and again long after you have initially understood their childishness, then and then only will these emotions slowly begin to mature. So far you have not realized what your emotions often claimed: that you receive more than you are willing to give, that you be loved exclusively. And you still live, unconsciously, in the wrong conclusion that if a dear one loves someone else, he necessarily loves you that much less. All this is immature and based on entirely wrong conclusions. Only by lifting these emotional reactions into consciousness can you realize this. Then you will become aware, point by point, of this vicious circle. After these emotions come to the surface, you will be able to think them through -- how and why they are wrong, in what way they are wrong. And by having the emotions on the surface, confronting their ignorance, selfishness, and immaturity without being ashamed, and then applying your conscious knowledge to these emotions, you will catch yourself whenever you fall back into old, bad emotional habits which in your subconscious will gradually produce more and more wrong conclusions. Each such awareness will help you further to break this vicious circle as it works in your personal case. Thus you will become free and independent.

The human soul contains all the wisdom, all the truth deep down. But all these wrong conclusions cover it up. By making them conscious and then following through point by point, you

must finally reach the goal of unfolding your inner voice of wisdom that guides you according to the divine conscience, according to your personal plan. When these divine laws, the general as well as your personal ones, are violated in your inner and outer reactions, your divine conscience leads you inexorably in such a way as to restore order and balance in your life. Situations will occur that seem like punishment while they are but the remedy for setting you on the right track. Wherever and whenever you deviate, the balance must be reestablished so that through your difficulties you will finally get to the point where you change your inner direction. You will change, not necessarily in your outer and conscious deeds, but in your unconscious childish requirements and aims.

So my dear friends, follow through this vicious circle, realize how it applies to your personal life.

Are there any questions with regard to this?

QUESTION: What happens to a child whose hatred and hostility breaks out in the open? Would such a child still have a guilt feeling?

ANSWER: Such outer manifestations often occur in children. Whenever a child has a so-called temper tantrum, these emotions do break out into the open. But invariably he is scolded for it, and he learns how "bad" it is. That fortifies the need to keep the true meaning of such tantrums hidden. And even if hatred is at times entirely conscious, later it is often suppressed. Then the same tantrums may continue inwardly in the adult, with no age limit, and ceases only when this vicious circle is made conscious. A person may develop a sickness which will be a form of a childish temper tantrum. Or he may simply make life difficult for those surrounding him. Such people by their unhappiness constantly inflict hardship with the aim of forcing their will, their compulsive need to receive the childish kind of love and care. This may happen in various degrees. Sometimes it is very obvious; at other times, it is much more subtle and hidden. What people say regarding such behavior is, "I am unhappy, you see. You have to take care of me. You have to love me." That is a temper tantrum without the childish outer manifestation. The mere fact that this hostility may at times break out in the open during childhood does not necessarily prevent a later suppression.

QUESTION: Would you be kind enough to tell us the difference between soul and spirit.

ANSWER: You all know that you have a physical and not only one but several subtle bodies. Each subtle body represents a certain aspect of the human personality. The higher the development, the more of these subtle bodies dissolve until finally the original spirit body, the original spiritual entity, remains. These various subtle bodies differ in degree of density of subtle matter. The densest is the human form, the physical body, at least from your sphere on. There are lower spheres before the incarnation cycle begins, where matter is denser even than your physical body. It is so dense that you cannot see and touch it. As far as you are concerned, the unseeable and untouchable would all fall into the same category of "subtle matter." Actually it is not so. There is matter that is so dense that you with your physical perception can no more see it than you can see real subtle matter, subtler than your own. You could walk through it just the same as a spirit who is not incarnated can walk through your matter. But from your plane of existence, the densest matter is physical matter. Then you have various other degrees of density. For each life on earth, you need this physical matter, but you shed it after each earth life. You also shed, soon after the so-called physical death, another body of matter subtler than the physical one. Then the soul body or the

feeling body remains. In this body are all your emotions, your emotional impressions, attitudes, and trends, in other words, all that which is your true and inner personality. As development continues to the highest degree, the soul body -- as well as all other bodies -- dissolve, and only the spirit, the original being, remains. The spirit is the indestructible, the eternal, which lives in you, containing the divine conscience I spoke about tonight. It contains all the wisdom, all the truth, and all the love, but it is covered up by these many layers.

QUESTION: When a person is sleeping, does the soul stay with the body or does it leave temporarily for revitalization?

ANSWER: It leaves temporarily. There are various subtle bodies that leave the physical body in different states of unconsciousness. Usually in sleep, the feeling body is removed from the physical body, sometimes more, sometimes less. It produces the pictures that you translate into symbols as a dream. If the feeling body remains during sleep in the physical body, sleep would be not profound but a rather disturbed sleep. But if real, good sleep occurs, your feeling body, or soul, is out. That is the physical rest. This feeling body can expand. It may be nearer or further. Is that clear?

QUESTION: Yes. Does one have to be sound asleep for relaxation or does a light sleep suffice?

ANSWER: The sounder the sleep, the more relaxation. You know that when you wake up. When you have had a sound sleep, you will feel much more refreshed than when you have had a light sleep. The sounder the sleep, the more removed is the feeling body from your physical body.

QUESTION: I have known some people who can relax for ten minutes and be thoroughly refreshed.

ANSWER: If the sleep is profound enough, a ten-minute sleep will give you more rest than a whole night of fitful and disturbed sleep, where, due to your tensions, your feeling body cannot completely exteriorate itself.

QUESTION: Another spirit told me once that it is good to have a very long prayer and meditation. After years, this became very much a habit. Some time ago when I asked you about it, you said that this may not be good because there is a rigidity and habit in such prayer and that I should try to unlearn what I did at that time. I was wondering what was the reason that I was told by a supposedly developed spirit to fall into this habit pattern?

ANSWER: When a person first comes to a spiritual path of development and is not at all used to praying and perhaps in addition not used to concentrating his thoughts, such meditation is a good discipline. It is favorable to learn concentration through prayer and meditation whereby your thoughts go through a certain cleansing process and you build a certain consciousness toward your ultimate aim. You learn to cultivate unselfish thoughts. Your thoughts are elevated in prayer, thus clearing the way for what comes at a later stage of your development. So the power to concentrate can be combined with cultivating constructive and unselfish thoughts, as it happens in prayer. Certainly concentration could be learned in connection with any subject, but it is better to learn it in this way than in a mundane matter. So you see, both the cleansing of the thought process -- as

happens in prayer -- as well as concentration is necessary on this path. Both could be learned separately, but it is just as well to combine them. Once this discipline is learned, one has to guard against the routine of prayer which makes it rigid and unalive. Different activities and attitudes apply to different phases of one's development. Once you have reached a certain point, it would be harmful in many respects to remain in a rigid routine. Once your prayer does not vibrate anymore, it is better to have short prayers that change according to your needs at any stage of your present development according to your existing difficulties and inner obstacles. The power of concentration you have learned can then be used for the purpose of self-finding in all the work you do on this path. That is much more productive than rattling off in one's mind the same thing over and over again. Children in the first grade will learn something different than later on.

Be blessed, every one of you, all who are here, all my friends who read these words, all your dear ones and your family and friends. Take these blessings with you, let them strengthen your courage, your will power on the path of self-finding. This is the only liberation possible, liberation of all your wrong conclusions, liberation from your compulsive high standards which make you feel guilty and undeserving of what God wants you to have: happiness, light, love. Be in peace, my dear friends. Be in the Lord.

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