

A Search for God

by Edgar Cayce

Book II

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Preface

In the preface of A Search for God, Book I, we have the explanation for the compilation of these lessons.

It was stated that twelve individuals (more at the beginning of the study) dedicated themselves to the task of giving to others the basic principles of soul development that came through the psychic readings of Edgar Cayce.

This they could do only through prayer, meditation, and endeavoring to live each lesson. For they must know that such lessons were workable in their own lives and therefore would be in the lives of others.

The Way made perfect is seen in the man Jesus who became the Christ; and who, through the spiritualization of the physical body by overcoming the desires of the flesh, was able to resurrect the body.

Hence, as there came the development of that first entity of flesh and blood through the earth plane, He became indeed the Son-through the things which He experienced in the varied planes, as the development came to the oneness with the position in that which man terms the Triune ... In materiality we find some advance faster, some grow stronger, some become weaklings. Until there is redemption through the acceptance of the law (or love of God, as manifested through the Channel or the Way), there can be little or no development in a material or spiritual plane. But all must pass under the rod, even as He-who entered into materiality. 5749-3

In this course of study the following excerpt will be helpful to those seeking deeper understanding: In giving that as might be significant in the experiences of [all], it is well that there be considered those conditions which exist in the world of thought, as well as in the political and economic situations throughout the world-if there is to be a practical application of the significance of the resurrection of Jesus, the Christ.

The life, the death, the resurrection of Jesus are as facts, in the hearts and minds of those here. The resurrection of Jesus, the Christ, is a significant fact to each individual only according to how he applies same (as it is significant to him) in his daily life, experience and conversation with his fellow man.

Then, in a material world-a world of hate, of divided opinions-what is the course that you each will pursue, in relationships to your fellow men?

Is it the course outlined by the tenets, the principles which He, the Teacher of teachers, gave as respecting the manner of life, of activity, that you each would give in your dealings and relationships with your fellow men?

We know, and only need to be reminded, that the whole law is in Him. For, as He gave that which is the basis, the principle, of the intent and desire and purpose which should prompt our activity, so we in our own world-as we live, as we speak, as we pray-are to let it be in that tempo, in that way and manner which was prompted by Him, as He taught His disciples how to pray.

Then as we analyze this prayer in our experience, we see what the life, the death, the resurrection of Jesus the Christ- who is the way, the truth, the light-must mean in this period in the experience of man.

Think not that He, God, will be mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that must he also reap. This was truly exemplified in the life of the Man of Galilee. For in Him we all live, we all move, we all die. So, in Him we are all made alive.

Then put away hate, malice, jealousy, or the taking sides with any that stir up strife.

Be ye rather on the Lord's side, knowing that no man is in any position of power or might save by the will of the Father, that there may be fulfilled that which has been promised of Him, by Him and through that advent of the man Jesus into a material world.

Then, as ye meditate upon the meaning of the resurrection of this man of God, know that the way is open to thee to approach the throne of God; not as an excuse, not as a justification, but rather in love, in harmony, in that which brings hope for a sin-sick world.

Each individual, then, may act, may live, may pray -in his or her own little sphere of activity-in such a manner as to bring peace and harmony, even among those who APPEAR to be at variance to the cause of the Christ in the material world.

Let not thy heart be troubled, then. Ye believe in God; believe also in Him-who came to bring peace, and the way to the Father, exemplifying same in the ability to take away death- that is as sin in the experience of man.

And thus may he (man) indeed love the Lord with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. 5749-12

Lesson I - Opportunity

Affirmation

In seeking to magnify Thy Name, Thy Glory, through that Thou dost make manifest in me, O Lord, be Thou the Guide, and-day by day, as the opportunity is given-let my hands, my mind, my body, do that Thou wouldst have me do as Thine own in the earth; for, as I manifest, may Thy glory become known to those through the love, the promises Thou hast made in Thy Son. 262-49

[Based on Edgar Cayce readings 262-49 through 262-54]

Definition

Opportunity is a material manifestation of a spiritual ideal. Through a physical body the soul has an opportunity to express the attainments developed in other spheres of consciousness. Life in the earth becomes an opportunity for paralleling, correlating, cooperating, bringing into existence the effects of using all experience presented for the development of the soul. Hence, opportunity, primarily, is material manifestation of spiritual actions in conscious forces of the material plane. (See 262-50.)

Opportunities Come Through Cooperation

Cooperation is making ourselves a channel of blessings to others. Each day, each hour, in fact, each thought, provides an opportunity for "giving." What can we give? Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."

Each one of us is in a particular job, a particular home, a particular city, state, and nation because we have prepared ourselves for this pattern. It is a time and place of our choice. We must begin our service here, now. A smile, a kind word, a healing thought, these we have and can give. For the life of self bespeaks the thoughts of the heart; and each shall so live that He, the Christ, becomes the opportunity for all who meet thee-whether at the table, in sleep, or walking in the street. (See 262-50.)

The Master went about doing good, making every opportunity a material manifestation of His spiritual ideal. Those who follow His example have placed upon themselves no great burden, for they have comfort in His words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Thus, cooperation must be put into the pattern of our daily lives. Through simple thoughts and acts we prepare for the greater opportunities that lie ahead of each soul.

A Knowledge of Self Helps Us to Recognize More Opportunities

Spiritual forces have so long been considered as being in the misty realm of theory that we are, as children, just becoming aware that our soul faculties can be applied in everyday life, and that this awakening within makes us more useful in a material world. Therefore, being more conscious of our opportunities is a result of the awakening of our inner spiritual faculties-our entering into a new world, the world of spiritual youth. As we develop, there will come urges and aptitudes previously unknown. Calls to service will come. May we be ready and willing.

Each tried met and overcome is a means toward development We should realize that each experience is an opportunity to test, to train, and to strengthen us. It is only little by little that we are able to overcome all things.

In seeking to know that opportunity that is given each in the present, it is one thing to live that there may be presented to another that which will open another's opportunity; and it is for self to recognize and use the opportunity in self's own development. 262-50

Do ever in self that thou knowest to be right, though it may make of self even an outcast to thine neighbor. 373-2

If we do not watch ourselves and know that of ourselves we can do nothing, our life may become clogged with egotism, bitter resentment, petty jealousies, and evil thinking. We may fall so low that we can scarcely see good in any condition, person or thing. We should know self well enough to realize that the fault is within us, and that we have within just what we see in others, else how could we recognize it? We must open the door to our inner selves and let in the Christ light, let our wills be one with His, listen to His voice, heed His call. To know self is an opportunity. To know self to be one with God is the supreme opportunity of man.

The Higher the Ideal, the Greater Are the Opportunities

Each and every soul must come to the consciousness of being a service in the activities of that it, the soul, worships in the infinite sphere or spiritual force. 262-50

Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Light, is the highest ideal. By holding to any lesser ideal for thought and action we build a fence around ourselves; we confine ourselves to conventionalities; we block the gate to service.

We must be free-free to think our own thoughts, free to live our own lives-and this freedom must be born of an attunement with an unlimited idea. "Know the truth and the truth shall make you free." What is Truth?

Remember, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." "Without me ye can do nothing." Without Christ, we could not of ourselves even recognize our opportunities, so filled would we be with self and selfish interests.

Let the meditations of the heart, let those activities of the body, bespeak that thou wouldst offer in self as an opportunity or channel for another to seek, to know, thy God. 262-50

Faith Helps Us Grasp Opportunity

An opportunity to demonstrate spiritual truth may come our way. Our so-called better judgment, from the material standpoint, may suggest that it is wiser to step aside and let it pass; for if there is to be a failure, it would be better for another to have the experience rather than have it ourselves. There is lack of faith in such reasoning. Faith is the inner spiritual knowledge of the Creative Forces of the Universe. It cannot be recognized by others who do not have the same inner guidance. They may call it poor judgment.

With faith we can move mountains of doubt, prove that thoughts are things and that words have power. Physical, mental, and spiritual demonstrations take place when no way seems open. Using what we have in hand, doing with all our might what our hands find to do, let us seize each opportunity. It is ours to act, to plan, to work; it is for Him, the author of faith, to give the increase. We may profess to have faith; but it is our actions that show how much we believe. As we study,

as we meditate, as we seek to use each opportunity, our faith in Christ, in the Father, in our neighbor, in ourselves, will grow. He has promised that help, strength, and understanding sufficient for all our needs will be supplied.

There will come tests-in the physical, the mental, the spiritual life. At these times we should rely on His promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Are we to be carried about by every wind of doctrine? Shall we fear as those who have no hope? In the trials and tests through which the world is passing, where are we found? Are we stepping out on faith, knowing that His presence is with us? Are we giving hope, faith, and comfort to those who have not had our opportunities? Do we not feel that we are called at this time to let our light shine in the dark places of doubt and fear? Is our faith firm in what has been promised, and are we passing it on to others? If not, we are weaklings who are drifting, and falling short of the calling whereunto we have been called. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." "For the day of the Lord is at hand."

Opportunities Found in Fellowship

What opportunity does fellowship with the Father offer? Surely we have experienced the relief that comes when we go to Him with our sorrows. It is there that our problems are solved, there that we find the peace that passes understanding.

The acknowledgment of our physical weaknesses becomes an opportunity for exercising our greater strength-the Divine within. As we take advantage of an opportunity in one direction, the Divine within helps us to recognize others. We know that we have fellowship with the Father if we love others and seek to serve them. Everywhere there are such opportunities, so we should be on our guard, to be sure that we use wisdom and discretion, to be sure that we recognize the opportunities that will take us onward toward the supreme opportunity, which is to be one with Him in desire and purpose. What is the Way? As He has given to those to whom He spoke, to whom He will speak, "... lovest thou me more than these?... feed my lambs... lovest thou me? ... feed my sheep."

[Symbolically] the sheep represent those that know of, and know, the Way. The lambs represent those that seek, that would know, that would find the Way, that would come if shown the tenderness expressed in The good shepherd feedeth the sheep; he tendeth the lambs." 262-51

We must both feed the sheep and tend the lambs.

Opportunities Are Recognized Through Virtue and Understanding

With virtue comes understanding and with understanding comes all the power and privilege of Divine Light. Armed with the weapons of spiritual warfare, we are able to enlarge our fields of helpfulness. We can, as with a two-edged sword, divide the right from the wrong, the true from the false, and be able to attempt greater things in His Name.

Life in the earth is a manifestation of God. It is no wonder, then, that we love to think of it as everlasting. Yet, when we misuse our opportunities, we misapply the knowledge we have of life and reap the results. If we do good, good must return to us, for "like begets like," not as a reward, but as a result of law. The result is spiritual understanding, which is a growth in spiritual development.

The direction in which we turn the activities of our life depends upon how we think, for "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." All power, all force, all life is from one source; if we misuse any portion of it, either by thought or action, we do not destroy it for it is of God, but we darken our own way; we dim the light that might be a help to others.

Many are wise in their own conceit; and often, as the Master said, "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light," since they use what light they have, even though they use it selfishly.

On such a basis the Athenians built an altar to the Unknown God. Paul declared that they ignorantly worshiped this Unknown God. For such a message he would have had to forfeit his life, if he had not clothed it in wisdom and delivered it with understanding. He knew the Athenian law against the introduction of other gods, so he took them where they were and preached God, the Father, "in him we live, and move, and have our being," whom, he said, "ye ignorantly worship." In the same manner we must watch our opportunities. We must be in such close touch with the infinite source of understanding that we at all times may render the right service in the right place.

Our Opportunities Should Be Met in Patience

In exercising patience we learn to recognize daily the little opportunities which are so important. Impatience to do great things blinds us. We should count it a privilege to be a servant of the servants in the Kingdom of God. Our servant is God's free individual; for in service to humanity we are making our wills one with His.

To do this requires patience with ourselves as well as with others. "In your patience possess ye your souls." It is possible to have a thing and yet not possess it. Our soul has within it all the attributes of the Divine. It is worth waiting, striving, working to understand and know ourselves to be individual and yet one with God. Let us not be in haste, but count each step as an opportunity.

The Open Door Is the Way into Greater Fields of Opportunity

Faint not in well doing, for there is being opened the door for greater opportunities. 262-51

Perception of truth is a growth in consciousness. Our finite minds cannot grasp all truth; however, doors are continually being opened through which we may go to greater concepts of truth, to greater understanding of the boundless love of the Father. There is being opened glory in the Spirit of Truth that convinces us of the knowledge of our relationship with the Father.

Now, as never before, there is open a door that none can close; for His word must be fulfilled, "... they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest."

It Is an Opportunity to Realize His Presence

When we seek to keep His Presence as a thing apart, something to be experienced, something to be aware of when we are disturbed in some manner, we lose sight of the fact that to abide in His Presence is the experience, the knowledge, the understanding, the opportunity of all as we seek to do His biddings. His Presence abides with us always, for it is in Him that we live and move and have our being. We must recognize this, come to know and understand it, to realize that we are children of the Most High. To be aware of His Presence is our heritage, our great opportunity in this material plane.

Opportunities Found in the Cross, in the Crown

Have we had a cross to bear lately? If we counted it an opportunity, it was easier to carry. Maybe we learned just the lesson we most needed in this experience. Know in whom thou hast believed, for the spirit of Right guards those who choose His way in directing the mental and spiritual life; "And know that all things work together for good to them that love God.. ." May we bear each cross with such a spirit and feel that all things are working together for our good.

This was exemplified in Him who is the Master of masters. It is a great opportunity to live day by day in such a manner that the Christ spirit may shine within, to heal and to bless.

The Opportunity to Know That the Lord Thy God Is One

When the divinity of Jesus was declared by Peter, Jesus said to him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Just so, to realize the oneness of all force-the Lord thy God is one-is an opportunity that comes through divine inspiration.

In order to have this experience we must conform to the things of spirit. Peter forsook all and followed the Master. Do we? That is not easy to do when viewed from a worldly standpoint; but if we pay the price, we too may see the glory of the oneness made perfect in Him.

There should be gladness in our activities. We should be on fire to use every opportunity to show that we realize that, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord." Are our wills one with His, or are they seeking to glorify our own desires, our own selfish interests? We should know that the way is not long, nor is the cross more grievous than we can bear, if our trust is in Him.

It Is an Opportunity to Love

We can recognize now as never before those attributes of the soul, that are ours to be used. Gradually, we come to realize the Presence of the Father, the oneness of all force, and the fact that the way back to perfection is through Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. This is made perfect in love. To love is the noblest expression of humankind. It is not simply of God, it is God; and as we manifest it, we manifest the God force that is within us. Whether in the physical, mental, or spiritual body, this power is the strongest and most dominant influence.

To love is our greatest opportunity. It brings happiness as nothing else does. All that is good is made a part of us as we seek to express love for our fellow human beings. Thoughts, words, acts, are opportunities for us to express this force day by day.

Consecrate yourselves, your bodies, your minds, your abilities in every direction, to the opportunities to be of service to those ye meet and contact day by day. 262-53

As we may ignorantly destroy a priceless painting with a few scratches, so may we, in misusing and misdirecting our forces, mar our bodies, our minds, our souls, in such a way that only a God of Love can recognize us. Though we may direct love into many channels, there is only One through whom there will be a realization of love made perfect, and that is found in Him, who said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."

The time draws near, the time is at hand, when there is more and more seeking for light and understanding. Let us then, in His way, manifest from day to day the love that has been showered upon us. May we so live that our lives become an example to those who seek.

May we pray:

*The Lord guide Thou [me] Thy servant in the ways [that he] should go.
"Let my going in, mine coming out, be wholly within the ways Thou would have me go. Direct my steps, direct my mind. Let Thy will be done in me; for, as the heart panteth after Thy own will, may my spirit bear witness-in the things my body does day by day-that the Lord is in His Holy Temple, and the rod has not passed from those that call on His name. For the glory of the Father to the sons of men may be expressed in those that would guide, guard and keep the holy ways." 262-51*

Lesson II - Day and Night

Affirmation

*In Thy mercies, O Heavenly Father,
Wilt Thou be the guide In the study of the manifestations
Of Thy love, even as in "Day unto day uttereth speech and
Night unto night sheweth knowledge." So may the activities of my life,
As a representative of Thy love, Be a manifestation in the earth.
262-54*

[Based on Edgar Cayce readings 262-54 through 262-67]

Introduction

Day and night are relative in relation to the earth. Viewed from an outer sphere, there would be only different shades of light and darkness as the earth moves about the sun. Conditions that exist in the material plane are but shadows of truth in the mental and spiritual planes.

". . . and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night." Thus day and night are figures of speech, spiritual symbols of good and evil. Day is facing towards the source of light, which, to those who seek to do His biddings, is the Voice, the Word, the Life, the Light, that comes into the hearts, minds, souls of all to awaken them to their relationship to the source of Light. Night is facing away from the source of Light.

In the mental, night is the knowledge that the soul is out of harmony with God; day is the first period of awareness of a way back to the source of all power.

In a figurative sense, day and night represent periods of growth and of recuperation-in the earth, the activities of a day and a night of rest.

Why the Creation of the World?

All souls were created in the beginning. This beginning refers not to the earth, but the universe. "Let us make man in our image . . ." is a description of a spiritual creation, for God is Spirit. "... and there was not a man to till the ground... And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." This was the second creation.

... all souls in the beginning were one with the Father. The separation or turning away brought evil. Then there became the necessity of the awareness of self's being out of accord with or out of the realm of blessedness ... By becoming aware in a material world is-or was-the only manner or way through which spiritual forces might become aware of their separation from the spiritual atmosphere, the spiritual surroundings, of the Maker. 262-66

So in passing through our various experiences, even as He, the first Adam, our soul becomes aware of its separation from its Creator. As the nature of our relationship to our Maker grows clearer, we begin to walk more and more in the Light in our physical experiences. We came here for this purpose.

Through experience, through suffering, we come to know day and night, light and darkness, good and evil, even as the Son, the Adam. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the

things which He suffered." Finally, we recognize that we are on our way back to our source. This alone brings satisfaction to our souls.

Day unto Day Uttereth Speech

Today is the day of opportunity. Each span of life is just another extended opportunity for light to break forth within us. We are enjoined to use that which we have in hand, and are then promised that our needs for further development will be supplied. A God of love waits for the awakening of each soul.

A majority of us devote the activities of a day to supplying ourselves and others with the material things of earth. Bread, shelter, clothing must be provided in proportion to the life pattern which we have builded. These things and the luxuries which seem necessary for the body's welfare cannot be made the ideals motivating our daily activities. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." What things? That which we need for peace and contentment. That which we need for spiritual growth. These will be added as we fill our days with activities motivated by Truth, Life and Light.

Would we have light? Then turn within. Let us find the answer to the problem that is keeping us in the dark. Let us judge no one, not even self, but study to know how we are using the knowledge, the understanding, and the opportunities that have been given us.

For, each individual must so live each day that he may look into the face of that he has spoken, that he has lived, and say: "By this I stand to be judged before myself, before my God." 257-123
It is well that we take stock of ourselves to see if we are advancing or retarding our own growth. Are all our plans in keeping with that He would guide us to do, or in keeping with our own desires? Do we love material things of the world more than the praise of God? Then know that in the way we go is the means for a better understanding or a serious retardment. Remember, the mental is the builder, the spiritual is the guide or the life, the conditions built in material things are the results. While there may come the pleasures of those things of the world for the season, the step by step should be for each of us, "I show, in my relations to my fellow man, in my conversation, and in my deed, that which I consider to be the relationship to my Maker." (See 257-123.)

Let us face the question. Do material possessions prevent spiritual growth? The answer must be determined by each individual for himself or herself. An examination of attitudes about material things, a critical study of personal ideals relating to possessions, will provide the solution. Greed and selfishness over a loaf of bread can be as damaging as pride and avarice over great wealth. There must come to every soul the experience of both great poverty and great wealth. In eternity there is plenty of what we call time for both.

When we pass out of the body from the activities in material things, what carries on? Is it not that which we have built within ourselves through constructive or destructive forces? Then, if our activity is as boundless as eternity, let our steps be in the way of Light, that these may bring, not only to us, but to those who follow after, those things that make for better understanding of what life is. Let us study to show ourselves approved unto our Maker, and not be confused, nor consider that the spiritual or mental life is different from the material, but know that one is the reflection of the other. If we live in the Light, the shadows fall behind. If our face is tinned from the Light, there can be nothing in life, in mental and material things, except shadows.

"Day unto day uttereth speech" becomes real to us in proportion to the light we are able to shed on others in our walks and associations among our fellow humans, and in proportion to our true understanding of the Kingdom of Heaven within; for we can teach others only when we ourselves know.

Night Unto Night Showeth Knowledge

Before light there was darkness, the darkness of our separation from God. In this night souls gained knowledge of universal laws through suffering. A way of redemption was prepared through, and out of, this state of separation. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."

In each of us there is the pattern of the original state of separation. With the night, there comes to us an opportunity for rest, reflection, meditation and inspiration; or a time for sin, misery, and mental torture. Just so, in each trying experience of life, night may teach us such a lesson of love and sympathy that we may be changed individuals, or it may harden us, submerge us, until our lives become a burning hell.

Gradually we may learn that life is an opportunity to better understand our relationship with the Father. If our experiences make us more like Him, more kind, more considerate of the fallen, more tolerant of those in authority, they are worthwhile experiences.

The night affords opportunity for us to appreciate the light; for hard experiences show us knowledge. Night is as a film upon which the real may be pictured. In this experience we may obtain a picture of the activity of light and become aware of whether we are making ourselves one with the light or are being held in darkness.

We have within us both light and darkness, and we must make the separation even as God did in the beginning with the whole universe. Creation is going on all the time in us, and we are becoming either children of light or of darkness.

While in darkness, we may become conscious of the light through the light within. It is then possible to realize our opportunity to turn around and come to the appreciation of the light even in the physical. How much more this is possible in the spiritual! "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil." "Choose you this day whom ye will serve."

Our spiritual activity must be in the day, in the light, if we would help others; for the night of doubt will come when no one can work. It will be then the time of harvesting that which we have sown. When the Master was tempted, He did not deny the existence of evil; rather, He recognized it for what it was, and made the separation, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan." When passing through the great trials of night, we have only to make our wills one with that of the Christ. If we mean this, then the burdens become lighter, the trials easier to bear.

Experiences Regarding Day and Night

There are times when we are very sensitive to the remarks of our friends and loved ones for they seem so unkind. If we study ourselves, we will find that it is we who are out of time; we have turned away from the light. In this state we unfit ourselves to be channels of blessing to others and bring to ourselves attitudes of doubt and misjudgment. What we see in others is a reflection of that which is within us.

We should come to understand that day is facing the source of Light with a mind that seeks to do His bidding. It is the Christ spirit that comes into our heart to awaken us to our relationships with the source of Light, and that helps us in our associations with others.

"I saw a large light. I recognized it as a manifestation of spirit. It moved toward me and disappeared within my inner self. It made me more aware that my body is the temple of the living God and that I must let my light shine in such a manner as to hasten the day of the Lord."

When we turn ourselves away from God, or good, we are living in the night of our life. There is a constant struggle between the forces of day and the forces of night. We can see readily the misery that it brings to each. All over the world people are seeking for something to allay the unrest, turmoil and confusion that exist; if all would only realize that peace must come first within, before it can come without, many problems would be solved. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." The world by its thinking shows its states of consciousness. Such states of consciousness may be as high as the heavens, or so low that all may be lost within darkness.

What may we learn from the night? Have we built our night, or are we suffering that others may see the light? Our Lord was brought "as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" that others might be free. If through suffering we may help others to understanding, we, as the apostle, may rejoice in tribulation, which shall work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory".

I Am-Alpha and Omega

The sum total of the beginning and end of our earthly existence is that we may fully realize that we are one with the Father and worthy to be companions with Him in glory. Day and night, light and darkness, conflict and conquest, love and service, are means to this end. The problems in a life experience can be stepping-stones to greater service in all realms.

"Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth... hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding."

[God] is the beginning and the end of that brought into material manifestation, or into that known by man as the plane or dimension from which man reasons in the finite. Then there will be to the body the correct conception of that meant. "I am Alpha and Omega; beginning and the end." That God, the Father, the Spirit, the Ohm, is the influencing force of every activity is not wholly sufficient unto man's salvation, in that he is a free-will being. As intimated that Alpha beginning, Omega ending. For, the confirmation, the segregation, the separation, the building, the adding to it, is necessary-in relation to those activities that lie between-for man's building to the beginning and the end. 262-55

Our sonship is exhibited in our choice of free will. Always the urge is to press on. As we were one with Him in the beginning, we will be one with Him in the end, through Him who is the Light, the Truth and the Way.

Conclusion

In seeking to become aware of, or conscious of, our relationship with the Creator and to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto Him, we must learn to differentiate between the day and the night side of life; that is, be able to place true values where they belong. To accomplish this a period of supreme testing may be necessary. As we develop toward the light, we imbibe that Divine Wisdom which aids in knowing the Truth.

Our lives must be judged by the results. If the results are peace, harmony, justice, mercy, love, we know the light is shining within; if they are the opposites, then we know that day has not dawned within us.

As we seek, great upheavals may take place in our life. Ideas which we thought had a sure foundation may crumble beneath our feet; that in which we had implicit confidence may prove to be false. Only God is unchangeable. If we live in accord with His divine laws and seek sincerely for

the light, obstacles that would hinder us will become stepping-stones to the realization of our fondest desires, while the impurities and dross that would despoil us will be burned out. Such experiences may be hard to endure, but they are very much worthwhile in helping us to attain to that goal toward which we all are striving.

We must not seek selfishly, but with the desire that His will may be done in all things; never with the desire to override, to outwit, or to outdistance others. God knows our possibilities much better than we, and when He sees a place which we can fill acceptably, the way will be opened. Let us give all glory and all praise to Him, the Giver of all good and perfect gifts, for the example of His Son, whom He sent into the world to guide us out of darkness.

The Son's power has not been diminished. His Spirit is constantly on the watch to guide those who would be guided over the rough and stony path, and to lift up those who stumble and fall. Let us have faith in the Infinite Power of Good, and know that God's plan for the world will never be overthrown. If we choose the dark path, know that He, from the very stones over which we stumble, will raise up others to carry on; for God is not mocked.

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:
If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there shall thy hand lead me,
And thy right hand shall hold me.
If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me;
Even the night shall be light about me.
Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee;
But the night shineth as the day:
The darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

Lesson III

God, the Father, and His Manifestations in the Earth

Affirmation

May the desire of my heart be such that I may become more and more aware of the spirit of the Father, through the Christ, manifesting in me. 262-57

[Based on Edgar Cayce readings 262-57 through 262-60]

Introduction

The purpose of this lesson is that there may be known to each of us how, when and in what manner we may be conscious of the spirit manifesting through us in material things. (See 262-60.) This achievement in a great measure will depend upon the application of the teachings found in our previous lessons. Each lesson is a step in a search for God until we come into full realization of His Presence abiding with us.

The Great Question

What is our concept of God? Is God in our life only a fact, an all-wise, all-inclusive, all-manifesting force, or is He a loving and forgiving Father?

No one deep within oneself doubts that God is a fact. All realize that life itself is a mystery beyond the explanation of the wisest, and that there must be a source from which it springs. People have called this source by many names but all have been moved by the intricacy and perfection of the universe. In the minds of many there is no need to seek another state of consciousness, for the Force supplies bountifully the wants of all who labor. It manifests in all things, and at all times; certainly, they say-God is a fact.

Then, how may we come to know God as our Father? God is a Father only to those who seek Him. "Te shall be my people, and I will be your God." So, as we, who apply that which we know of the Father's will, go about thinking-and thinking in such a manner that the words of the mouth and the activity of the hands bespeak the will of the Father-then, this activity, this thought, makes us the channel through which the manifestations come.

For, who may know in the earth the heart of the mother save a mother? Who may know the will of the Father, God, save those that put into the acts of their hands, in the thoughts of their minds, those things that He has given and as He shows forth in the experience of all men from day to day?

So simple, then, is it to know the Father that all stumble in that they think of themselves more highly than they ought to think. 262-58

Instead of seeking to be channels through which the Father may make His love and His glory manifest in the earth, we often, in our selfishness, seek our own ends.

Be rather as a channel through which the Father may make His love, His glory, manifest in the earth. Listen to the voice from within. For, He is very nigh unto each of you, if ye will but look

within. And that thou experienceth with the desire that thy self be nothing, that the Father, the Christ, may be glorified in the earth, brings to the experience of all the consciousness of being a manifestation of the love of the Father to the sons of men...

*What are the manifestations of the Father? The fruits of the spirit. Gentleness, kindness, the loving word, patience, hope, persistence, and-above all-consistency in thy acts and in thy speech. Be ye glorious in thine activity. Be ye joyous in thy words. For, happy is the man [who] knoweth that his life bespeaks that the Son and the Spirit of Truth directs the words and the activities of his body!
262-58*

A question which naturally arises is, "How can we interpret some of the words and acts of others as manifestations of God, when they hurt us so much?" Condemn not in words, in thoughts or activity, that you be not condemned. Be angry and sin not. Be patient, seven times seven forgive; yes, seventy times seven. (See 262-59.)

We should see in every experience of activity of another our attempt to express, to manifest, our concept of divine reality. Each one of us as we give expression in thought, or in act, shows what is the impelling influence in our experience. We must not be a judge or a faultfinder; but, rather, be merciful to those who err; for they know not what they do.

God, the Father

Do we know God as a loving Father? If we have not had the experience, why are we afraid? Are we too lazy? Are we willing to accept and use the abundance that is set before us, to enjoy the pleasures and bounties of a divinely created world, without a thought of a great Force behind and in all things? This failure to recognize that which is the essence of life, leads us to self-indulgence and self-gratification, whereby we increase the misery of our fellow human beings and bring turmoil and suffering upon ourselves.

To know our relationship with the Father we have to pass often through trials and sufferings. That is not God's way of finding us, but our way of coming into realization that we are on the wrong road. All of our trials have been of our own making. The longer we fail to acknowledge this fact, and fail to do anything about it, the longer we are in coming into our full relationship with the Father. Let us remember that only self stands in our way.

Jesus, the Christ, is the greatest example of the Father's love. Through the teachings presented by the Son, God has shown an understanding of each heart, a willingness to bring peace to each soul that will turn toward Him.

The Manifestations of the Father in the Earth

The children of the Father seek to manifest His spirit in the earth. It is the law. Like begets like. We are each a corpuscle in the body of God, performing our individual function.

We and God do not measure greatness in the same manner. The truly great are those who have the spirit of love, never those who march to power through the blood of their fellow humans. One seeks for self glory, the other is selfless in glory. As we study the lives of those who, under great difficulties, have expressed the fruits of the spirit, and observe how the world has been made better through their efforts, it should give us courage to do faithfully that which we find to do.

The Master has told us He has gone to the Father; that is, become one in consciousness with the Father; and that whatever we ask in His name, the Father will give to us, that He, the Savior, the

Christ, may be glorified in the earth. If we are His we should know that the answers to our prayers are to His Glory, and for our good.

It is often necessary that we be tried as by fire. The fires of the body, the fires of desire, the fires of the flesh, the fires of the carnal forces, must be burned up.

When conditions and circumstances bring experiences to us that try our souls, and we search in anguish for a reason for it all, we may realize a deep and abiding joy and peace in calling to mind the admonition, "Be still, and know that I am God."

When there are those activities in a material world that bring about the forces or influences wherein there may be the action of a soul in its development, it may be often counted to some as sin or error, while in reality it may be only mercy to that soul from an all-wise and beneficent Father, who is directing, planning, giving the soul an opportunity for the use of that which may come into the soul's experience in the material plane. What the soul, through its body and mind and their attributes, does about the knowledge, the consciousness of the indwelling of the spirit of life through the Christ in the earth, is the opportunity for that soul to develop. Therefore, when we condemn, it is a selfish manifestation, and is an attempt, as was the first sin, to blame on another that which we ourselves have done, else we would not recognize it.

Perfect Manifestation in the Earth

If we would know the love of the Father (that has been manifested through His Son, who overcame sin, error, disease, and even death itself in the material plane), then let us rely on the power of His indwelling presence and have a greater knowledge, a greater understanding of the Christ Consciousness, the Christ Life, in our experience.

To accomplish this we do not have to shut ourselves away from our friends, our associates, or even our enemies. The Master never did. If it is our purpose to manifest perfectly the fruits of the Spirit, this is possible through our manner of living. We should seek, therefore, to know His way for us. This cannot be achieved by denying the existence of sin or error. It is true that sin and error are not of God except through our willful disobedience. If there is in us the manifestation of greed, avarice, hate, selfishness, unkindness, ungodliness in our life, they will bring their fruit-contention, strife, hate, avarice, and separatenees from the light. Those who have turned their face from the light of God can see only shadows and darkness. Yet, if they will turn to the Father of love as manifested in the earth through the Christ, even in this life there may be seen the light and the glory of a new birth. "... for His mercy endureth forever."

The Father has not left His children alone, but for every temptation has prepared a way of escape. Should we be less merciful? We were in the beginning made children of God, yet few of us act as His children.

We can understand better perfect manifestation in the earth, when we comprehend, when we realize that there is no time, no space, and that the divinity of the man Jesus was perfect in His own activity in the earth; for it (His sacrifice) was offered even from the first. (See 262-57.)

If we would be perfect manifestations then, let us be ready to forgive, even as our Master did. He did not set any moral law but that of which the soul of humankind was conscious. So, we may know that within dwells the spirit of God, that which quickens if we will acknowledge His power and His divine right with us. When the Master lived among people His presence cleansed all who sought relief from physical disease, and better prepared them to manifest the fruits of the Spirit in their lives. He did not save their bodies from the grave or transition from one sphere to another, but He quickened their souls and their minds to such a degree that they would cry as Joshua of old-"... as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Throughout the experience of humanity in the material world, at various seasons and periods, would-be teachers have come; setting up certain forms or certain theories as to manners in which individuals shall control the appetites of the body or of the mind, so as to attain to some particular phase of development.

There has also come a teacher who was bold enough to declare himself as the son of the living God. He set no rules of appetite.

men should do to you, do ye even so to them," and to know, inasmuch as ye do it unto the least of these, thy brethren, ye do it unto thy Maker. He declared that the kingdom of heaven is within each individual, and that each through meditation upon the fact that God is the Father of all could become aware of the kingdom. Such a teacher became the Christ. Here, then, you find a friend, a brother, a companion. As He gave, "I call you not servants... but I have called you friends." For, as many as believe, to them He gives power to become the children of God, the Father; joint heirs with this Jesus, the Christ, in the knowledge and in the awareness of this presence abiding ever with those who set this ideal before them.

What, then, is this One as an ideal?

As concerning our fellow human beings, He taught that we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us, to take no thought, to worry not, to be not overanxious about the body, for He knows what things we have need of. Then we should realize that in the place, in the consciousness in which we find ourself, today, is that which is needed for our greater, our better, and more wonderful unfoldment.

But today HEAR His voice, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The Lord loveth those who put their trust WHOLLY in Him.

This, then, is that attitude of mind that puts away hate, malice, anxiety, jealousy. And in their stead, since mind is the builder, creates the fruits of the spirit; love, patience, mercy, long-suffering, kindness, gentleness. And against these, there is no law. They break down barriers, they bring peace and harmony, they bring the outlook upon life of not finding fault because someone "forgot," someone's judgment was bad, someone was selfish today. These ye can overlook, for so did He.

In His own experience with those whom He had chosen out of the world, if He had held disappointment in their leaving Him to the mercies of an indignant high priest, a determined lawyer and an unjust steward, what would have been thy hope, thy promise today?

We Are Manifestations of God

Let each of us, in our meditations, in our study, in our observations of the concepts in this lesson, make applications of whatever spiritual law we become conscious of through our individual experiences. For, as He taught, we may call Lord, Lord, even may heal the sick, may cast out demons in His name, and yet not be accepted in His sight. The lives of those who make profession of their associations with Him must bring forth manifestations of those things that are of the spirit, of the fruits of the spirit. "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

What are the manifestations of the Father in the earth? To do good to all people, to manifest the fruits of the Spirit in our thoughts and in our acts, as we meet our fellow humans in their own conditions where troubles, doubts, fears and distresses assail them. As we manifest the fruits of the Christ, of the Christ Consciousness, in our words, our acts, in our dwelling with others, we will,

as the Christ, manifest in the earth good to all, whether they are of His fold or those who reject that which He lived and taught. In this manner the Son manifested the Father in the earth: so in Him we have an example.

As we apply those truths that we know, we will come to those experiences where we may be lamps to the feet of the wayward, an aid to those who seek, a light to those who have gone astray, a guiding hand to those who would know more and more of the love of the Father as it manifests in the acts, the thoughts, the lives of His followers.

What is our light? What is our guide? Have we tried just being kind in order to see how this law operates in the experience of our neighbor?

A smile raised hope; that hope made possible activity; that activity made a haven for some discouraged, disheartened soul.

Let us smile though the heavens fall; though we may become as naught in a world of selfishness, we may rejoice in the light of Him who has given Himself for our redemption.

Let Him, the Christ, be the guide. Let Him build for thee the mansion, rather than with thine own puny hands where moth and rust doth corrupt and where those that unconsciously in their stumbling manners oft make the road rough for thee. Forgive them, if ye would be forgiven. Hold not a grudge, for that which is thine may not be taken from thee lest thou alone cast it aside by envy, strife, unkind thoughts, unkind acts, and thus destroy that thou lovest most-life! 262-60

How long has been the cry, "Hasten, O Lord, the day of Thy kingdom in the earth," of those who have manifested the glory of the Father through the Son. What are the promises that the Son has given? "I go to prepare a place for you... that where I am [in consciousness], there ye may be also." "I will come again, and receive you unto myself." As we attune our mind and our body-activity into that consciousness, our desires hasten the day. While the merciful kindness of the Father has, in the eyes of many, delayed the coming, and many, as were the children of Israel, are ready to say, "Make us gods, which shall go before us." In patience, in listening, in being still, may ye know that the Lord does all things well. Be not weary that He apparently prolongs His time, for, as the Master has given, as to the day, no one knows, not even the Son, but the Father and they to whom the Father may reveal it. The Son prepared the way that all people may know the love of the Father in the earth. Into our keeping, to us His children He has committed the keeping of, the saving of the world. Then know that as our minds, as our hearts desire more and more for the glorifying of the Son in the earth, for the coming of the day of the Lord, He draws very nigh unto us.

Keep thine heart and thine mind singing in the glory of the manifestations, of the beauty and of the glory of the Father in the earth, as thou hast seen manifest among men...

Keep in the way that thou knowest to do, for He requires not other than that ye be true to that thou knowest in thine heart to do. For He calleth those by name that have named the name of the Christ and that keep His ways, and through such may the love of the Father, through the Son be manifest in the earth. 262-58

Lead me, O Father, just for today, that I may be used as a channel of blessing, that I may today manifest Thy love through my association with those I contact for as I show forth Thy love in the earth to my fellow man, the promise comes to me that Thou wilt guide, guard, protect and comfort me in the ways that I go. 262-60

Keep ye all in the Way. Be happy. Be joyous. And may love and mercy and peace, that cometh from the Father to those who use themselves in His service, be with thee. Amen. 281-19

Lesson IV - Desire

Affirmation

Father, let Thy desires be my desires. Let my desires, God, be Thy desires, in spirit and in truth. 262-60

[Based on Edgar Cayce readings 262-64 through 262-72]

Introduction

Desire originates in the will. It is of the earth and of the spirit. It is activated, in the realms in which it is directed, by that which is the motivating force, through the will and the mental abilities and faculties of the individual. (See 262-64.)

[Desire] is the basis of evolution, and of life, and of truth. It also takes hold on hell and paves the way for many [who] find themselves oft therein. In spirit, in body, in mind. 262-60

Desire is the power which drives our physical, our spiritual self, while will is the directing force. The positions in which we find ourselves are drawn to us through our desires. Whatever we are physically, mentally, or spiritually has been built through desire.

Physical Desires

It is written in the Scriptures, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Biologically, we make ourselves as animals on the physical plane with three primary urges-self-preservation, propagation of the species, and hunger. These three are forces in us and animals that are instincts. If by the force of will we use them for self-aggrandizement, they then become material desires, and are the basis of carnal influences. In so doing we belittle our spiritual or soul body.

The basis of physical desire is adding to, contributing to, or gathering together, in forces, that which makes for the abilities of each of us to revel in those urges that are of the animal nature. If we are governed by these, there is no recourse for us other than through spirit. Our soul was created as a companion with the Creator, able to become aware of itself, yet with influences that require the spiritualizing of the creative power of will. This develops god-likeness in the soul or activity. (See 262-63.)

... spirit moves in the direction in which it is motivated by will and desire. 262-64

Physical desires which are not spiritualized hinder the development of the consciousness of oneness with God.

"I asked in prayer for three things. All of them were physical desires. One was for the protection of the name of the family, one for comfort, one for some work to do. The prayer was answered, but it did not bring either peace or harmony, only discord, trouble and greater responsibility. In whatever place we find ourselves, if we have the Christ spirit, we will have peace."

Mental Desires

Desire is that impulse which makes for activity of the mental body, whether the impulse is produced from the environ that affects the physical organism, or that which arouses the spiritual or soul body to an activity.

Our physical desires that remain carnal in purpose may become powers for evil when strengthened by a mind that is evil in its intent. The mind in humankind, with its ability to make comparisons, to reason, to have reactions through the senses, can be raised to such forces of activity that it creates for us the environs about us, and changes even our hereditary influences. Our mental desires that are to laud ourselves, to appraise ourselves, above our fellow humans, make it possible for carnal desires to become stumbling blocks in our experiences. It is one of the immutable laws that whatever the mind of a soul dwells upon, that it becomes; for mind is the builder. If our mind is in attunement with the law of force that brought the soul into being, it becomes spiritualized in its activity; if our mind dwells upon or is directed toward carnal influences, then it becomes destructive.

Let Thy will, O God, be my desire! Let the desire of my heart, my body, my mind, be Thy will, O Father, in the experiences that I may have in the earth! 262-63

When we make our lives and activities in accord with the laws that are manifested in spiritual attributes, we find that we grow in grace, in knowledge, and in understanding of His ways. Let us pray, "Lord, use us; let that which Thou seest is best be done in and through us at this time." Let that mind be in us that was in Him, who asked nothing for Himself, but went about doing good. Our purpose and our will stimulate desires that grow and take hold upon the mind as do habits upon our bodies. Let us again remind ourselves that our mind is the builder, regardless of whether it has its inception from spiritual forces or from carnal forces. If we would grow, we must keep our mind in constructive channels. We know that the source of all that builds is He who has declared that He is the way, the truth and the light. The earth was brought into being by Him. We are His by creation, His by possession, His through those promises given to the children of mortals. What is our desire? What will we do with this man called Christ?

Spiritual Desires

Let us empty ourselves of desires that are physical in purpose, that our spiritual attitude may be glorified in our walks before our fellow human beings. Our greater soul development may be found by losing sight of ourselves, by spiritualizing our material desires, and by seeking more and more the Christ Consciousness. In the garden when the Master prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will," we see the flesh warring with the spirit itself and physical desire spiritualized.

In making our physical desires one with the will of the Father, we will pass through conditions in our experience similar to those of Jesus, who became the Christ. Pray then that His will be done in us, and through us, that we may desire to be channels of blessing to others, in the ways and manners that He sees best. "Not our way, O Lord, but Thy way." This is spiritualizing physical desires.

In studying desire, we may question in our mind as to whether it is necessary for us to give up all physical desires in order to develop spiritually. It is not necessary to give them up, but it is necessary to spiritualize them, that our desires may be His desires, and His desires, our desires. "And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also," are examples of spiritualizing desire, for in so doing the desire for vengeance becomes spiritualized through love and forgiveness.

This experience is an illustration: "I had reached the place where I must choose whether I should take my place with those who are preparing the way for the coming of His Kingdom, or accept the

ease and pleasure the world offered me. It was a great comfort to me to know that the Master had a similar choice to make, and that in love He overcame desires of the flesh. My prayer was, I cannot bear this alone, my Savior, my Christ, I seek thy aid."

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the gospel of love and forbearance. To be like Him we must spiritualize the desire to get even by doing good to all for His name's sake. We must desire that the Lord will use us as channels of blessing to all whom we contact day by day, and that there may come in our experience whatever is necessary that we may be cleansed completely; for when our soul shines forth in our daily walks, in our conversation, in our thoughts, in our meditation, we spiritualize our desires in the earth.

As He has given, "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" Let our desires be so unselfish that we may never sin against our fellow human. We must be the arm, the shoulder, the one upon whom some may lean as they come in their experience to the knowledge of the love of Christ.

When we have suffered through the acts of others and can realize that the suffering has made us more gentle, more considerate, when we regard with compassion the one who caused the suffering, and desire that nothing but good may come to that person, then our desire for revenge has been changed into a spiritual desire.

Physical forces are in the material realms of activity. Mental forces are both spiritual and physical in their reaction to the body and to conditions mental, spiritual and physical which surround us. If our purposes are spiritual, and we hold to them, we are more able to meet and overcome adverse conditions in the material. Every force, every power, that is manifesting as a force in the material has its inception in spirit; and when applications are made of a material nature, they must coordinate with the mental, the spiritual, the physical, in order that greater and better conditions may be manifested in material things.

His mercies are sufficient unto those who put their trust in Him. Has the Father changed? Has He faltered in His promises? He has promised to meet all after the pattern given on the Mount. "Draw nigh to God." "... so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God." His children are those whose desires are His desires. When we hold such attitudes we have no fear, for "perfect love casteth out fear."

The Wisdom of Unselfish Desire

If our activities are such as to bring into our experience the satisfaction of selfish interests for fame, fortune, position, and to be well-spoken of, they are physical. If they are such as to bring into our life the desire to express love, patience, long-suffering, gentleness, kindness, service to others, then they make for spiritual development. If we desire to know whether we have chosen wisely, we should ask ourselves, "What is the desire that is being gratified by the attributes of the relationships being sought?" If it is for aggrandizement of self's own physical desires, then it is carnal. If it is for creating a channel for an expression of good, then it is spiritual. As to the choices, these we ourselves must make. What we sow we must reap. Ambition, unless it is tested in God's crucible, is of itself sin. Not that we should not be ambitious-no-but rather ambitious that God should be the guide, and not self.

When we view ourselves either from the spiritual, the mental, or the material plane, we may see reflected in our experience just how we have meted out the knowledge we have known. What we do with our abilities, our opportunities, brings forth fruit in due season. We find ourselves either at peace within, or filled with doubt, fear and consternation. Would we have peace? then let us make life peaceful to those whom we love, to those against whom we have a grudge, to those whom we do not care for. If we would have love, then let us be lovable even to those that show, in our own

understanding, disregard for His ways. For the events of life are the experiences and expressions of a soul seeking. What in the experience of humanity can be more direful, more dreadful, than to be lost, yet seeking? Fear and trembling assail us, yet- will we let Him in? His spirit maketh our spirit and soul aware of the love of the Father. The toil and strife are for just a little while. We are living now in eternity.

Let praise and honor be in our purpose toward those things that make us aware of His Presence abiding with us; for His promises are sure, and they who walk with Him shall know Him. The Price must be paid! There is no such thing as receiving without giving. If we would have life we must give life. If we would have joy we must make joy in the lives of others. If we would have peace and harmony we must create peace in self and in our relationships with others. This is the law, for like begets like. We do not gather olives from thistles, or apples from bramble bushes, neither do we find love in hate.

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." May we in wisdom choose Thy desire to be our desire.

Conclusion

Know that what we choose to do has a constructive influence within ourselves and those about us; else beware. Those things that bring pleasure and ease in material associations in our life are not at fault unless we worship them or use them selfishly. Things of the earth will pass away, but love that sustains in the hour of testing abides with us always. Knowing this, let us keep the earth singing. This can be done as we look deeper into the heart of the rose, listen to the song of the bird, see the paintings of His face in the setting sun, see the loveliness in the moonbeam that turns all into the radiance of His glory, see in the raindrop, the storm, all nature, and even in those ugly things in people's lives, the desire for expressing love rather than hate, harmony rather than discord! As to results, leave them to Him who gives life, who takes life; for The earth is the Lord's... and they that dwell therein." Let us fill our minds with the desire to know that we are the Lord's, and He will work in us and through us, guiding our hands and our feet and our walks in the paths of life, that we may be channels of blessing to all whom we meet.

Come-come! Let us make known our desires in the light of that which has been promised by Him, who is the Light and the Way, to those who seek to know more of the Father's will. Let us make known the desire of the heart, that we may be one with Him. We must not faint at the trials, at the temptations, at the weaknesses; for He has called us. Will we not harken? He is able to fulfill that which He has promised into our material, mental and spiritual experience. Let not evil overcome us, but let us overcome evil in His name.

Each soul goes on from things terrestrial to things celestial, from things material to things mental and spiritual, and in each of these realms the consciousness of the soul seeks expression in that particular field of activity which it has built within its own inner self. The soul lives on that it may become more and more aware of abiding, and living, and being in the Christ Consciousness.

Come, my children, ye that seek the Lord; He is nigh unto thee. Thou hast purposed well in thine studies, in thine preparation for those that would seek through these channels to know more of what thy Lord, thy God, would have them to do. Be not satisfied, but rather content in that ye are being a channel of blessing to thy fellow man. Thou art as the leaven that will leaven the whole, for some there be among you that will hear His voice-and He will walk and talk with those that are willing, joyously, that He, thy brother, thy Christ, thy Savior, would direct thy ways. Keep the faith.
262-67

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done; as in heaven, so in earth. Give us for tomorrow the needs of the body. Forget those trespasses as we

*forgive those that have trespassed and do trespass against us. Be Thou the guide in the time of trouble, turmoil and temptation. Lead us in paths of righteousness for Thy name's sake. 378-44
Come ye children that seek the light! Bow thine heads in praise to the Son. For, the way for each of you that would seek His face, is being opened before thee. The Son of Man, the Christ, thy Lord is among thee even in thine heart-if ye will but open the door to Him! 262-63*

Lesson V - Destiny of the Mind

Affirmation

Lord, Thou art my dwelling place! In Thee, O Father, do I trust! Let me see in myself, in my brother, that Thou wouldst bless in Thy Son, Thy gift to me that I might know Thy ways! Thou hast promised, O Father, to hear when Thy children call! Harken, that I may be kept in the way, that I may know the glory of Thy Son as Thou hast promised in Him, that we through Him might have access to Thee! Thou, O God, alone, can save! Thou alone can keep my ways! 262-73

[Based on Edgar Cayce readings 262-73 through 262-90]

Introduction

We have come, in our search for God, to a point where we enter a new cycle. The information which we shall now study may be found by some to be at variance with much that has been presented by many others. Truth may be proved only by results. If we would be led by the Spirit that leads into all truth, we may expect to have many opportunities for proof in our own life. We alone can judge as to that which is truth for ourselves.

Our next three lessons will be on destiny: Destiny of the Mind, Destiny of the Body, and Destiny of the Soul. The first lesson, Destiny of the Mind, deals with mind in its relation to the varied attributes of the mental, physical and spiritual bodies.

Mind is of God. It was given as a grace to us, that we, that soul might be a companion with, one with, the mind of the Maker. Therefore, mind, a creative, Godlike force, is impelled by a spiritual impulse to build an at-one-ness with the Creator. Its various phases confuse many, yet they are made plain as we make our mind, our purpose, and our aims one with our Ideal, and realize that the Lord our God is one Lord.

Destiny

Destiny is a law, an immutable law, as lasting as that which brought all into being. It is expressed in all the varied spheres of manifestation. We see its signs here and there, written in the experiences of all whom we meet along the way.

Destiny is that immutable law set by Mind, that called into being worlds, the universe, the earth, humankind. This MIND, God, gave to us a soul, a portion of Himself, and when we fell away He furnished a channel, a way, an access to the throne of grace, mercy, and truth, through the Son. The soul is that part of us that may be in accord with, in the presence of, the Father. Flesh and blood-until spiritualized as He, the Christ, spiritualized His body-cannot inherit eternal life.

However, in the final analysis, the motivative force of each atom of the physical body is the Mind of Creative Energy.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." What is this law of destiny? What is this gospel? What is this judgment? What is this truth? Is it summed up in, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" or "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise," or is it answered in the new commandment of the Master, "Love one another"? Yes, the whole law is fulfilled in love, in Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The Lord is... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." We wonder, can such be possible in threescore and ten years in the earth? We wonder, does the time of birth, the place of

the environment, make or have a part in our destiny? Do the days or the years or the numbers all have their parts? Yes, and more. All these are signs, omens, marks along the way. But these signs do not design a destiny; for destiny of the mind, of the soul, of the body, is in Him. Nothing that we may do develops righteousness (262-75), but it is the mercy of the Father, exemplified in the Son, which provides for the destiny of mind, body, and soul in the endeavors and environs of their experiences. The way is so clear that there need not be any stumbling for those who put their trust in Him.

Let us be mindful; for the day of the Lord draweth nigh to many. While we wonder, let us search our hearts and know, as of old, that faith is counted as righteousness to those who love the Lord. The soul that seeks shall find. The soul that puts into practice day by day that which it knows may the sooner find peace and love in the earth. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." In such faith we will know that our destiny is in Him.

Mind in Relation to the Mental Body

There is the triune—the mental body, the spiritual or soul body, and the physical body, and these are one. They, in their own spheres of activity, have their attributes, their precepts, and their ideals. What one finds in the physical is a material manifestation of a spiritual import built by the mental aspect. In building the ideals, the mental body, or the mind, builds either from that which is spiritual (and thus everlasting) or from the material import which changes under varied seasons, environments and outlooks in the experiences of life.

In the beginning God created the heaven and earth. The mind of God moved, and matter with form came into being. Mind, then, in God, the Father, is the builder. Mind, in itself, is both material and spiritual. That which finds expression or manifestation in material things is of the physical, for matter is an expression of spirit in motion. That which is expressed or manifested in spirit, without taking body or form is of spirit, yet may be manifested in the experiences of an individual. Mind may function without form or body, but the Ideal is of the unseen Force or Spirit.

So mind is the moving influence that promotes growth within us and makes for expressions in materiality. What is the meaning then of: "For as he thinketh, so is he"? It is in this way that growth comes. In material things, as we shall find as respecting the Destiny of the Body, as one eats so is the physical person. So it is what we continue to think, we become. We destine that which is the growth of influences in our experiences, that which fulfills the purpose for which we came into being, or just the opposite. Not by a thought do we change this or that, but by constant thinking, constant building.

Christ came into the world to teach us how to think constructively, in order that we might return to our original estate. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, Who... thought it not robbery to be equal with God." He lived in the earth, in matter, yet with the mind, with the thought, with the manifestation of Creative Force in every phase of expression. Through God's gift of a free will to the soul, each entity is endowed with the power to use this building force, the mind, to glorify self or find attunement with God.

As we contemplate, as we meditate, we should know what we are seeking. What is our ideal? What would we have our mind-body become? Let us remember, it becomes that upon which it feeds, either by thought, by assimilation, by activity, by radial force, by atomic influence, or by the influences of activity in any sphere in which it finds itself. Frequently, we are confused in trying to analyze the source of any impulse. We cannot tell whether it comes from the activity of the physical mind or from some indefinite spiritual source. The result is that we are likely to become involved in interpreting the difference in the spiritual import and the physical necessity of such an impulse. What has been set? It is what we do about that which we know which brings growth; for

the first movement of mind from the spiritual aspect or from the material aspect is ever a portion of our activity. Therefore let us set our Ideal in Him who shows the way, and know in whom we believe.

Mind in Relation to the Physical Body

Souls chose to manifest in material bodies, and thus mind found an expression in the physical plane. Mind is still the building force. Through the action of the physical mind, our activity, the food we eat, the very contour and expression of our features are gradually molded. We are an organism partaking of all about us.

The question, naturally, is asked: Is the destiny of our mind set at the time of our birth into materiality as to what we shall think, what our environs will be, and what will be the length of our period of expression in the earth? Are we destined to have this or that experience? We should remember that our choice, our wills add to the pattern we are building. This pattern destines that we will pass through experiences that are necessary to give us greater opportunities to become one with that purpose for which we came into being. Thus, that which our mind works at in its thinking, in its purpose, we become. Does this belie that which the Master gave, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" It indicates-rather, assures those who accept what He has given-that it, the thought, the growth is never accomplished through inactivity, but through repeated activity.

Have we then anything to do with our days in the earth? How do we read? "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Then is it with us? Is it within the gift of the Father? Both, "For in Him we live, and move." If we think and live the life of love in Him that is life, that is Love, we fulfill that destiny which He has purposed for us.

Mind in Relation to the Soul Body

What we think, what we put our mind to work upon, to live upon, to feed upon, to live with, to abide with, that our soul body becomes. That is the law, as in the beginning each thought of the Creator bore within itself its own fruit. What propagates the species in the seed of the oak, the grass, animal, or the human being? It is the active force that moves within its own realm of activity, giving expression of that first thought of Creative Forces. That is the destiny which the Easterners say was set in the beginning. But this is only half a truth; for if the mind dwells upon spiritual things, it follows that it becomes spiritual; if the mind dwells upon self-indulgence, self-aggrandizement, self-exaltation, or selfishness in any of its forms or variations, then it has set itself at variance with the First Cause. Even before we came into matter-the will, through the mind, was at variance with Creative Forces.

This law, "Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord," enabled us to comprehend the true nature of the Father: One, from everlasting to everlasting. When we become constructive in our thinking we create in our experience the knowledge of this oneness. There has been that battle of duality between flesh and spirit from those periods when we first projected ourselves into flesh. While flesh, as all matter, dies in the physical plane, the soul does not; for it is life itself, a gift of God to us, and only in patience may we possess it.

Signs Along the Way

In the earth plane there are certain signs which we may interpret according to individual understanding. They indicate the development reached in the soul's journey through many spheres of experience and point the way to the path chosen by the soul for this present life's

expression. It is regarded by many that some of these signs are found in the study of astrology, numerology, phrenology, and palmistry. We should exercise great caution in allowing any of these to become the ruling influence in our interpretation of destiny; for they are all subject to the will and indicate only development and possibilities.

Dreams, astrology, numerology, the vibrations from metal, stones, and so on, should be considered only as lights or signs in our experiences. They are as candles that we stumble not in the dark. Worship not the light of the candle; but rather that to which it may guide us in our service.

The vibrations of numbers, metals, and stones are merely influences to help us to be in attunement with the Creative Forces. The pitch of a song of praise is not the song nor the message therein, but a helpmeet for those who would find strength in the service of the Lord. So let us use them only to attune ourselves. How? As we apply that which we know, we are given the next step. These do not give the messages! They only attune us so that the Christ Consciousness may give the messages. It is the application that makes for the development in relation to conditions or experiences. The birth on a certain date does not destine this or that. The destiny is only that certain urges may arise, but what we do about them makes for the changes. Each country, state, and town makes its own vibrations by or through the activities of those who live there. Much confusion arises as many of us may try to interpret signs in accordance with the changes in vibrations which have been brought about purely by our will.

In seeking for light let us not confuse the signs with that which is sought, nor confuse the impulses that may arise from inner urges, or from the emotions of the body that take hold upon the spiritual forces, with that which has prompted them. All power, all force, is in Him, and is subject to His will. In Him is the light that we should seek, that we, in body, mind, soul, and purpose, may be one with Him. He is the Way! (See 818-1.)

Do dreams of physical conditions come to pass? Are such conditions set at the time dreamed? Why should we dream of any given conditions? These may be answered for us if we recall that the law of cause and effect is immutable through choice in our experiences. Hence, as our thoughts, purposes, aims and desires are set in motion by mind, their effects are as a condition that IS.

In dreams we attune our minds to those storehouses of experience that we have set in motion. At times there may be the perfect connection, while at others there may be static or interference by our inability to coordinate our own thought with the experience or fact set in motion. The result of a perfect attunement is evidenced in our lives, for some see visions, some are interpreters of the unseen; some are dreamers of dreams, some prophesy, some are healers, some are teachers; yet all is from the same spirit. This may have little reference to destiny, but it has much to do with mind, the soul mind.

Conclusion

We are fellow travelers on the road to God. There are many routes and many ways of transportation from which we may choose. We may be directed along the way by teachers, but no one can show us the whole way except Him who is the Way, and in whose keeping is our destiny.

So, know ye the way; point it out. For, as He has given, though ye come to the altar or to thine church or to thine group or to thine neighbor pleading not for self but for others, and it is that ye may be exalted, that ye may be honored, that ye may be spoken well of, for others; He cannot hear thy petition. Why? Because there has another entered with thee into thy chamber, thy closet, and He, thy God-that answers prayer, that forgives through His Son-is shut out. In His name, then, only; for, as He gave, "They that climb up some other way are thieves and robbers" [they that robbed themselves of attaining perfection through the Way]. [See John 10:1.]

Then, today, will ye not rededicate thyself, thy body, thy soul, to the service of thy God? And He that came has promised, "When ye ask in my name, that will be given thee in the earth." Then, do not become impatient that ye are counted in this day as a servant, as an humble worker, as one that is troubled as to food, shelter, or those things that would make thy temporal surroundings the better. For ye grow weary in waiting, but the Lord will not tarry; eternity is long, and in that ye may spend it in those things that are joy and peace and harmony, make thy self sure in Him. How? "As ye do it unto these, my brethren, ye do it unto me." [See Matt. 25:40.] Just being kind! Thy destiny is in Him. Are ye taking Him with thee in love into thy associations with thy fellow man, or art thou seeking thy own glorification, exaltation, or thine own fame, or that ye may even be well-spoken of. When ye do, ye shut Him away.

Enter thou into thy chamber not made with hands but eternal; for there He has promised to meet thee. There alone may ye meet Him and be guided to those things that will make this life, now, happiness, joy, and understanding.

As ye have received, love ye one another even as He has loved you, who gave up heaven and all its power, all its glory, that thy mind can conceive, and came into the earth in flesh that ye through Him might have the access to the Father, God. In Him there is no variableness or shadow made by turning. Then, neither must thy thoughts or thy acts cause a frown or a shadow upon thy brother-even as He. For He gave, "Be ye perfect, even as thy heavenly Father is perfect." Ye say, This cannot be done in this house of clay!" Did He? Ye say, This is too hard for me!" Did He grumble, did He falter? To be sure, He cried, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass." Yea, oft will ye cry aloud, even as He. Ye cannot bear the burden alone, but He has promised, and He is faithful, "if ye put thy yoke upon me, I will guide you..." Take Him, then, in thy joys, in thy sorrows, in all of thyself; for He alone hath the words of life. 262-77

Lesson VI - Destiny of the Body

Affirmation

Lord, use me in whatever way or manner that my body may be as a living example of Thy love to the brethren of our Lord. 262-84

[Based on Edgar Cayce readings 262-73 through 262-90]

Introduction

In the physical we have the body, the mind and the soul. Each of these represents a phase of experience or consciousness. Our physical body is that which is manifested in the earth in materiality, that which has taken form. The destiny of the body depends upon us. It is held by some that the body, being of the earth-earthy, is born into the earth, dies and to the earth returns. Yet the pattern has been shown by Him who entered into the earth that we through Him might have life and have it more abundantly, that we, day by day, hour by hour, again and again, may realize the revivifying and the rejuvenating of our bodies, until, as He, we come into the consciousness of the perfect human. This may take many experiences in the earth. How gracious is our God in mercy and patience that He shows toward us! Jesus used the words "abundant life," abundant experiences, to show the extent of God's goodness to His children that they might come to an understanding of their oneness with Him.

The destiny of mind is both material and spiritual. Since mind is the builder, there is a very close relationship between the destiny of the mind and the destiny of the physical body. It is through the mind that the destiny of the body is gradually builded. With God rests the destiny of the soul, with us the destiny of the physical body, through the gradual building process of our mind working in and through our physical consciousness. It should be the aim and purpose of our conscious mental activity, therefore, to bring our thinking, which directs the control of our physical body, into accord with the higher purposes of the spiritual mind.

We have each been given stewardship over a portion of life. May we so live that we may say, as the Master, "Of that thou gavest me, O Father, I have lost nothing."

What Is the Physical Body?

Our physical body is an atomic structure, subject to the laws of our environment, our heredity and our soul development. Each atom, each corpuscle, has the whole pattern of the universe within its structure. Our body is made up of elements of various natures that keep it in motion and sustain its equilibrium. It is the channel, the house, the piece of clay, that is the dwelling place of the sold. The mental body, the soul body, and the physical body are shadows of the Triune, The body-physical is as human, the body-mental is as the savior of humanity; for it is through the application of the mental influences that we control and build that which finds expression both in the physical and in the soul. The soul-body is as of the Creator, for it, the sold, was made in the image of its Creator, to be His companion in spirit. That the physical is the home of the soul during its sojourn in the material world is evinced to all who think about it; what we do with the opportunities that are presented to us in our varied experiences one with another is for each of us to determine.

Are We Aware of the Destiny of the Physical Body?

Our body is the temple of the living God, of the living soul. Is it to see corruption? Is it to be lost entirely, or is it to be glorified, spiritualized? As our body is a structure in which we manifest as a portion of the whole, so our body is in the keeping of its Keeper, even within us. What will we do with it? God gave us free wills. God Himself does not know what we will destine to do with ourselves, else would He have repented that He made us? God has not ordained that any soul should perish. What of the body? Have we ordained, have we so lived, have we made our temple so untenable, that we do not care to have it glorified?

We attempt to adorn our body for our fellow humans. Do we care less for our God? Do we purge the body, as He has given, that it may be made holy for a dwelling place for our sold? What it becomes depends upon that which we do with our opportunities. If we would be like Him, then we must so live, so conduct ourselves, that our body may be one with Him, and be raised a glorified body to be known as our own!

That we may be called by a different name in each experience may be confusing to many; yet when we say Creative Force, God, Jehovah, Yah, Abba, do we not mean one and the same thing? Always we carry throughout various experiences of our consciousness the desire (if we seek aright) to be one with Him, to know ourselves to be ourselves and yet one with the great I Am. The destiny of our body, then, lies with us, and what we do with it in one experience or many experiences is of our choosing.

What Is Meant by Presenting Our Bodies a Living Sacrifice?

We should present ourselves as channels of blessings for others. To be a blessing may demand that we present ourselves as a living sacrifice, as a living example to others; yet we should understand that sacrifice does not necessarily mean a giving up, rather it is the glorifying of the body for a definite purpose, for an ideal, for a love.

Thus may we in presenting our bodies, through the application of that which we know, show a way in which others may see the initiation necessary for awakening a purposefulness in their experience. It will turn hate into love, strife into peace. Our thoughts, too, have their activity in the experience of all and create the environ, the atmosphere, from which others often draw that which will be the motivating influence in their experiences.

We have each been given stewardship over a portion of life (God). May we be living examples of the things that Christ, the Master, taught and lived. When He calls upon us to render service to others, shall we answer, "Here am I," even though it appears to others that we are laid on the altar of sacrifice? To those who love His ways it is only a reasonable service.

How Shall We Use This Holy Temple, Which Is Our Body?

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Then we should take heed how we think; for thoughts are things and may become either crimes or miracles in our lives. It is with right thinking and right acting that we keep the holy temple pure. He stands at the door and knocks. It is necessary to keep our temple clean, so that nothing can enter that will in any way defile or defame the abiding place of the Most High.

Keep the temple silent. Let not the noise or confusion of the world make us afraid, or in any way interfere with our worship. It is possible to be in the world and yet not of the world. Let love alone enter and find an abiding place, that we may become as He, who first loved us.

The pattern has been shown by HIM who entered into the earth that we might have an example. If we would be like HIM, then we must conduct our life so that a glorified body to be known as our very own may be raised. To accomplish this, our mind and our body must be purged so that we

may know the glory of HIM who took His own body and so glorified it that it became a pattern for all.

Let the spirit of the Christ guide us from within, and the way will be shown to us. No greater awareness can be had than that which comes when He, who is the Maker, the Author, the Finisher of Life, comes and abides with us.

May we never think that the opportunity has passed; for God's mercy is without limit. We make the choice when we realize that TODAY is the acceptable day of the Lord! It is never too late for us to begin, for life in physical experiences is a continuous effort for making the way in a material world, whereby we may justify ourselves before the throne of grace. Inasmuch as ye do it through love, through kindness, unto the least of these, my little ones, ye do it unto Me, is the manner in which it is accomplished.

All things are possible with God. Do not expect results in a day; for we do not sow one day and reap the next, but we reap what we have sown in the periods when that which is sown comes to fruition. Indiscretions and sentiments that are based wholly upon material satisfactions, must bring to us tares and weeds in the experience of our body. Those things sown in mercy, truth, and justice will bring their rewards in the same realm, in the same coin that has been sown; for God is not mocked.

If we do our best, we need not worry about results. We can leave the results with our Maker. Let us do right, not merely to be seen of others, but that the glory of the Father may be reflected through our kindness, patience, and brotherly love. These activities beget health, harmony and understanding.

Let us be sure our brother, our servant, yea, our neighbor think as well of us as we think of ourselves! If they do not, it is because sin lies at our door. This does not mean that we should condemn ourselves; for we know that we are God's handiwork, and should act accordingly. We should know in our heart that what is done in secret must be proclaimed from the mountaintop in our own experience. Even though justice or retribution be delayed a thousand years, we must meet that which we have sown. How will we ever meet it? In the strength of ourselves? Rather may we harken to the promise, "So shall ye be my people, and I will be your God."

What shall we do with this holy temple, this body? Purify it, glorify it, that it may be of priceless value when returned to its Maker.

What Is Meant by the Resurrection of the Body?

The body that we have taken from matter has assumed various forms, sizes, and colors. Hence, with what body shall we be raised?

The same body ye had from the beginning! or the same body that has been thine throughout the ages! else how could it be individual? The physical, the dust, dissolves; yes. But when it is condensed again, what is it? The same body. It does not beget a different body! 262-86

We have one wavelength that is ours. We have one light beam, and on it we must come in, must go back to the Father, or else lose our identity. Then we must seek to purge the body until it is raised a glorified body to be one with the Whole, and yet be our own. In other words: to know ourselves to be ourselves, yet one with God. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Our Lord resurrected and quickened His body. He is our pattern. So we, as He, must overcome death, overcome that transition, overcome that which is the conscious change of being in all matters, all phases, all experiences, that we may be one with Him, as He is one with the Whole.

How Should We Regard the Experiences of the Physical Body?

What we are today is a result of the way and manner in which we have used the opportunities given to us by God, the Father. When we do not take into account our relation to the First Cause, God, we know those things that pertain to the gratification of material desires, that so often turn and rend us. The seed of every plant is within itself; the seed of every living influence is within itself. So in our acts in relation to our fellow human beings and to the world as a whole, the results that will be in our experiences are according to that which we have sown, or the manner in which we have dealt with our fellow human beings.

It is through activity that we may become more and more aware of how we use our opportunities. If we practice error, then error becomes more and more prominent in our dealing with others. If our activity is selfless, then we become like Him who gave Himself for the world. In whatever way we prepare ourself then the time and place to use that prepared will come.

Let the light of His countenance guide us. He, our Lord, is willing, if we use our body, our mind, our abilities, as channels of expression for Him. As known or experienced by those in the material plane, or in any plane of consciousness, those abilities that are manifested are the outgrowth of the application of opportunities by an individual entity in this or that experience. Then it may be seen that in aiding others there comes greater aid to us; for it becomes a part of ourselves and a portion of our own experience.

The purpose for which our soul chose to come into this earth plane was to awaken the Divine within, which is done through manifesting the fruits of the spirit toward our fellow humans. Then we should do with our might what our hands find to do, leaving the results in the hands of Him who gives the increase. Let us look upon every experience as a necessary element in our own development, knowing that He who clothes the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field will be mindful of those who love His ways.

All in matter, all in form, first began in the urge of mental or spiritual influence, and that which prompted them came into manifestation under the influence of divine guidance. That which is error, that which is shame, that which is of disrupting forces, become negligible unless given power by thought, and by activity of the mind. Not that denying alone makes for nonexistence, but rather that those things presenting themselves as errors, as a disrupting influence, may be used as stepping-stones for the creation of those environs in which we may change trial, temptation and hardships, into helpful experiences: for through the things which He suffered and overcame He became the King of kings, the Lord of lords. So with us it may be found that by using our experiences rightly there may be brought into our consciousness harmony, which is another name for peace, for good, for joy. For while flesh and blood that is of the earth may not gain or know glory, the body, the real body-not the superficial, but the real body-may become aware of itself in the Presence of the body of God, among its brethren, and a portion of the Whole.

Let us keep our innate faith in the oneness of power in Creative Forces; and as we express it in our activities with our fellow humans, as we hold it in our meditation, as we hold it in our mind, so will it be experienced in our inner self. All must pass under the rod, but He has tempered it with mercy and judgment. So must we temper our judgments, so must we find patience, so must we find those things within self that make for the answer to us before the Throne of grace. If we would have mercy, we must show mercy to our fellow human beings, yes, to our enemies, to those who despitefully use us.

Death in the flesh is a birth into the realm of another experience, to those who so live that they are not bound by earthly ties. This does not mean that we do not have our own experience in and about the earth, for we come into the earth plane for the purpose of further development toward a cooperative, coordinating activity with the Creative Force that manifests through our activities in

materiality. In the earth the choice is by will, while in the interim, between the earthly incarnations, the choice is conditioned by that which has been accomplished by us in manifested form; for we must meet that which we have sown in the body.

How May We Show Ourselves Approved?

Our bodies are only channels through which our souls may manifest the attributes of the spirit of truth in a physical plane.

We find ourselves in that state where we are subject to the faults, the failures, the conditions, that work upon our weaknesses. These may work through environmental and hereditary influences or through associations, yet there is the awareness in our experiences that God, Creative Force, has prepared the way of escape from those things that so easily beset us, if we call upon Him in sincerity. Our activities are our voluntary choice. We have been given the manner, the way in which the Christ Consciousness is manifested in the earth, through Jesus. He came as man that through His example, love, patience, and hope might be shown. This He exemplified in His activity, that we might choose, as He, to do that which is right, just, sincere, and honest, in our activities one with another. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The way is simple. Yet those who would seek through the mysteries of nature, the mysteries of the manifestations of life in the earth, or those who would see the activities of their neighbors, friends, or associates, rather than listen to that which may be had through the still small voice from within, become troubled and wondering, and then fearful, until there come periods when the sureness of self is lacking.

What are the requirements then, that we may become aware of His presence abiding with us? They are that we manifest love, patience, hope, charity, tolerance, and faith in our daily life. These words, these expressions, these as visualized objects may be within us, and when we make such manifest in conversation, in example, in precept to those whom we meet day by day, we become aware of the Christ Consciousness.

Know the truth for the truth's sake. "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." Let not, then, the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, pomp, glory, or fame, hinder us from applying in our relationship with our fellow humans those laws through which we may become aware of His presence.

That offences must come, is true, but woe to them who bring them to pass!

May we not be idle in doing that which we know to be right. Let our activities be positive, our love be without dissimulation.

"Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."

As we have seen in our own body that which has brought the fires of nature, the turmoils of disease, the wonderments even of distress, and as we have seen those influences, those powers, in nature that are manifestations of His love to others, we know that in our weakness, in our strength, on Him alone we can lean for strength. He has prepared a way. We, in any phase of our experience, are only the channels to make application, or to give helpful understanding to others. His abiding presence is in and with us.

The destiny of the body lies with us. We can take only a perfect body back to our Maker. (See 696-3.)

Lesson VII - Destiny of the Soul

Affirmation

Lord, let me-my mind, my body, my soul-be at-one with Thee: that I-through Thy promises in Him, Thy Son-may know Thee more and more. 262-88

[Based on Edgar Cayce readings 262-73 through 262-90]

Introduction

Humanity in its natural state is soul. In the beginning all souls were created in the image of the Creator. Thus the first creation was spiritual.

The development of our souls in a material world is as a garment that is made up of the warp and woof of materials that we have gathered through our experiences in every plane of consciousness.

In our sojourns in the earth, we wear many kinds of garments-working clothes, prison garbs, and wedding gowns. Just so we build into our souls, through our mind directed by our will, that which is Godlike and uplifting, or selfish and degrading. That which we build within our soul gives it the opportunity for occupying a position of honor or dishonor. Through the will, however, we may make those things that are of dishonor as stepping-stones to positions of honor. This, too, makes its mark on the soul. Our will is a divine attribute; how we use it determines our destiny. Each soul is an offspring of Creative Force of GOD, and is innately the result of the manner in which it has manifested the prerogative of WILL.

Let us strive to understand that life in its essence is spiritual force, and is continuous. The point of expression may be in matter, as here on earth, or in any of the many different planes of consciousness, but mind is the universal moving force which acts and builds through all planes, and gradually brings an awareness of our own individuality in that Creative Force we worship as God.

Creation of Soul

The soul is of God. It had its beginning in God and its ending is only in Him. To name the name of God is to recognize that we are a part of the Whole, and we know, because we are of the Whole. Our soul, as a part of Creative Force, came into being, and was given breath, by the will of the Father, that it might be a companion with Him in His activity. Our soul is everlasting, containing eternal creative power, and through expressions of this power we may come to know ourselves to be one with Him. Then the destiny of the soul, as of all creation, is to become one with the Creator.

The entity is the manifestation of soul in spiritual, mental, and physical form. Though our soul may have wandered far afield, though it may make its bed in hell, though it may take the wings of the morning and fly to the utmost parts of the universe, eventually it must wend its way back to the source from whence it came, to its God, its Maker.

Our soul never dies. How can Spirit die? How can God die? How can God destroy Himself? Though our soul may choose to take up body afterbody, though it may seek experience in this or that sphere of consciousness, it is ever seeking the way back from whence it came. What is the origin of the soul? What is the origin of eternity? Eternity is from everlasting to everlasting. "When the morning stars sang together"-we were there. When the heavens fold up and time will be no

more, behold-we will be there. Now, as in the beginning, we are children of God, and our destiny is to be rulers and priests and priestesses unto Him.

The Soul's Association with the Mind and the Body

The soul body is the image of the Creator, a companion in spirit with the Creative Force. It is too wonderful to describe. It, as God, must be experienced to be known. Our physical body is simply a temporary house for our soul. Opportunities are presented to us through physical experiences for using and directing the soul powers lent to us by God. The way we use these powers in relation with others shows the concept or degree of awareness of our attunement with God.

Through sojourns in the earth our soul, through will, brings upon itself many experiences that may result in confusion, turmoil and strife, or a better understanding of the purposes of life. For example, if we consider that slights, slurs, and unkind words are directed against us, and we remain untouched within and can rise above the selfish desire to strike back, then we can understand what Jesus taught as He urged us to seek attunement with the Father. Jesus overcame in this way and knew that we, too, could rise above being hurt, or tempted, or mistreated. With Him as the pattern there is within us no desire to strike back. Each time we resent, we add to these confusing urges that become stumbling blocks for us. Thus we may use those things that have hindered, that would cause the quickness of speech, the anger at being thwarted, as stepping-stones to a more perfect understanding and to a realization of being in accord with His Way.

As we give our selves, our love, our patience, and our kindness, however hard it may be, to help others, we learn His Way and may depend upon His help to sustain us. If we let the beauty of His life guide us, then those things that beset as a temptation, those things that make us afraid, may be cast upon Him, who has promised to bear our burdens with us.

It is well that we understand that our soul takes on physical bodies as means through which practical applications can be made of tenets that make for the development of our soul. Such opportunities arise in our dealings with our fellow humans. Our entrance into the earth plane at any time is for the purpose that another lesson may be gained, another opportunity for soul expression may be had. Our knowledge of a law is not sufficient within itself, but when knowledge is made active and practical, it then becomes a moving force in our lives. Let us seek to make our bodies channels through which Creative Energy may become an active force, whereby we may gradually become aware of our own identity in the Creator.

We may become aware of our soul through commonplace, everyday observance of spiritual laws within our understanding, by putting into daily application the laws of love and service to others. We must measure up to that which we hold as the ideal in our relationships with our fellow human beings, for we can estimate our concept of God by examining our attitude toward others.

Jesus meant what He said when He told us to seek first the Kingdom of God-then all things might be added, but they are added only when we are in harmony with those around us. Then it is in patience with self, in patience with our friend, in patience with our foe, that we become aware of our souls. These are the manners, these be the ways, in which we may know that there is an access to the Father through the Son.

No soul has been left without access to the throne of mercy and grace. The promise has been given, "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter." Though there may be periods of trial and temptation, when our purposes seem fraught with disappointments, if our faith has been placed in Him we may find that which will help us grow in understanding and knowledge of His love; for whether in the body or out we are His manifestation.

The soul's association with mind and body is the greatest of earth's experiences, but to spiritualize all three and make them one in Christ is the work of a Master. That is our privilege.

The Activities of the Soul in the Material

It is not knowledge, nor is it understanding, but the application of the opportunities that present themselves, that builds the destinies that arise in the experience of our soul. A law is not set and our soul set adrift upon the sea of time or space. There is something that we must do, and there is always the presence of the Father to sustain us. He has promised, moreover, to meet us in the Holy of Holies, and He is not slack concerning His promises.

Let us study, then, to show ourselves approved unto those promptings that come from meeting the Divine within, and be able to say we know in whom we have believed, and know that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him in every experience that may arise. The spirit that prompts our activities in a material world arises within the soul and is expressed in our dealings with our fellow human beings; therefore, we cannot hate our neighbor and love our God; we cannot worship our God and hold malice against our neighbor, for these are of One Force, and the law of One is perfect.

If we sow in spirit, our mind builds that which we reap in spiritual values; if we sow in materiality, our mind builds that which is of the earth-earthy. Let us put our ideal in spiritual things and know that as we mete unto our neighbors, so will it be meted unto us. In our relationships to our fellow human beings, let us act in such a way that we may always look ourselves in the face and not be ashamed to have accorded to us whatever we have accorded to our neighbor; for we must meet ourselves.

Let us keep an attitude of sincerity, of oneness of purpose; for if we are sincere with self, and most of all, sincere with our fellow humans, we will not fear to be called into the presence of our God. Thou, O Lord, art holy in Thy dealings with Thy children. O God, we are Yours in body, mind, and soul! Purge us, that we may be one with You, and through that power that You have given us, may we make known to others the beauty and the love that You have showered upon Your children, should be our prayer.

Do we have one standard for self, and another for our friends, for our relations, for those about us? All are one in Him. If we would have peace, mercy and grace shown us, we must show them to others, for in so doing we become aware of the indwelling of His presence.

If we use our knowledge to gain the advantage over others, or to lord over them, what must be the destiny of our soul? The Master gave, "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ ... he shall not lose his reward." It is not, then, in mighty deeds of valor, or in those things that bring fame or fortune, it is not in the things of high estate, that the greatest soul development comes, but rather the growth comes as line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little, through kindness, love, patience, scattered along the way.

Such growth in spirit brings true knowledge and true understanding of the purposes of a soul's indwelling in the earth; and this understanding helps us to realize that unless that which we do is for the good of others, it must eventually fail; unless our activities among others are to aid the greater number, rather than classes, they are of little benefit to ourselves or others. For, true indeed, they that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to them it is evil. They that know not and do evil, to them the Father may give countenance; but they that know evil and do it, to them it is damnation.

Our soul must meet itself and give an account of its activity in the earth. What we do in the physical we meet in the physical, what we do in the mental we meet in the mental, what we do in the spirit we meet in spirit. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." When we know to do good and do it, we make our life worthwhile. After all, it is just being gentle, though others are harsh, just being true, though others are false, just being patient, though others about us are impatient. If we are on the Lord's side, who can be against us? (See 696-3.) We find ourselves in that which we have built; so, to do good, let us use that which we have in hand; the environments and experiences that make for changes that are necessary in our life will present themselves. If the preparation is made, the time and place to use our knowledge will come about. It is the law; it is His love. (See 991-1.)

Conclusion

Let our choice for development mean more and more seeking to be in at-onement with God, the Creative Activity within our experience. For each expression of our soul in any phase of its experience may, through works, through thoughts, and through activity, become a channel of expression of the Creative Force in the material world. This is the natural growth, the purpose for which we entered into every experience, that there may be the greater expression of God through us.

Finally, the destiny of our soul is in Him who gave the soul, that we (our soul) might know, might be one with that Creative Force we call God. The manner in which we use opportunities makes for either consternation, turmoil, strife or just the opposite. How has God meted judgments to us? Not other than in the manner in which we have shown mercy. What will we do with this man, our elder brother, our Christ, that our destiny might be sure in Him? He has shown us the more excellent way: not in mighty deeds of valor, not in the exaltation of knowledge or power, but in the gentleness of spirit-love, kindness, peace, long-suffering, patience. These, as Jesus has shown, must be applied in our associations with our fellow human beings day by day. There is nothing in heaven, in earth, or in hell, that can separate us from the love of God, save ourselves. (See 849-11.)

Then the exaltation of ourselves, of our abilities, of our powers, of our indulgences, must be lost in gentleness and in patience; for it is only in patience that we become aware of our soul. When our individuality is lost in Him, our personality shines as that which is motivated by the individuality of our Lord and Master. Thus does the individuality and the Destiny of the soul lie in the keeping of Him who has given Himself in the world that we may know everlasting life. He has given that if we abide in the Father, "I will bring to your remembrance those things from the foundations of the earth, from the foundations of the world, that ye may be where I am; and thy glory in my glory, in thy God, shall make of thee that oneness that passeth understanding of men who see only a mental-material consciousness." (849-11)

"There will come a day in which all who dare
May see the Lord.
And those who put on the robes of righteousness
May rest in peace.
And those who have come up through great tribulations
Will fear no more;
For the King of Glory, on the brow of the blessed
Will place a diadem
And great joy will fill the heaven and the earth,
For death will be no more."
P.E.

Lesson VIII - Glory

Affirmation

Open Thou mine eyes, O God, that I may know the glory Thou hast prepared for me. 262-89

[Based on Edgar Cayce readings 262-90 through 262-95]

Introduction

In the interpretation of Glory, we sometimes let conditions disturb us; therefore, we often get an incorrect understanding of it. GLORY IS OUR ABILITY TO SERVE, which is an opportunity given to us by God. When Glory is considered from the phase that God has chosen us above our fellow humans for some special work, then vainglory may creep in. All are called into service; God is no respecter of persons. Our ability and our service begin with cooperation in being channels through which the glory of the Lord may be manifested in the earth.

Glory, then, in all phases of our experience, as related to Creative Force in manifestation in the earth, is to be studied with conditions that deal with our fellow human beings. Then, if we would fill the place for which we have been called, we would let our glory, our knowledge, our wisdom, be in the Lord; for our glory is only a reflection of the glory of the Creator. It shines on us and through us as we become channels through which blessings may come to others.

The manifestations of God are varied; yet in purpose He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. In our spiritual ideal, purpose, and aim we, too, should be unchangeable. Our activities may be varied, but they should always be expressions of the glory of our spiritual purpose; that is, expressions of our oneness with the Father. "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Such is glory.

Glory of the Mind

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Unless our mind is stayed in Him, the giver of life and light, we may find ourselves chasing shadows in our search for glory. The mind is ever the builder. With our minds firmly fixed on our Ideal, who always lost sight of Himself, we may find glory in service by using our minds to build within us knowledge and wisdom that will fit us for greater opportunities-not to the glory of self, but to the glory of God. It is indeed a glorious thing to be constantly in the hands of the living God and to know that no matter how difficult the problem is, it will be solved eventually in the right way.

To accomplish this, our ideal must be beyond the purely material things in life. Those things that are of the earth rust and corrupt, but those ideals that are founded in the spirit of life and truth take hold upon the very throne of mercy, peace, and harmony, and build within us an understanding of long-suffering and love of others.

That which is impractical and theoretical is of little value. Oft we have heard that we should not let our good be evilly spoken of. This may occur if we speak one way and live another. Oft we proclaim in our experience that we believe this or that, and then proceed to act differently. Then such activities become stumbling blocks. What is the law? Like attracts like! "Purify thy body, physically. Sanctify thy body, as the laws were given of old, for on the morrow thy God would speak with thee!" (281-13) How do we interpret such a promise? If we believe this, we should do something about it; for it is not what we declare that we have attained, but how willing we are to be used in practical and helpful service for our fellow humans.

Jeroboam made the children of Israel sin when he offered the sandalwoods of the Egyptians. He only aroused passions within himself, when he should have made his offering to the GLORY of the Lord. (See 274-10.) So may we, for self-glory, for the approval of others, offer to our Lord that which may bring our destruction.

When we have put off the glory of self-exaltation and put on the glory of God, conditions, circumstances, environs are no longer stumbling blocks but become stepping-stones in our development.

The earth is a school for those who in the beginning erred through self-indulgence, self-aggrandizement, self-glorification.

It is, indeed, a merciful experience then; even though we find turmoils, strife, antagonism, and disturbing forces in our experience, we have opportunities through which we may be cleansed, and may become channels through which a GLORIFIED Father IN the Son may be manifested in and among humans.

We should take into serious consideration the fact that animosities or hard feelings held against others create in the mental forces of our bodies that which may easily become very destructive influences. Our outlook, and the way we worship that which we hold as our Ideal, have much to do with our physical reactions. Our mind, let us remember, is of our mental, physical, and spiritual bodies, and it can either create or destroy.

If there is built within our mental forces the attitude that there is a hindrance that blocks us in any manner, it gradually becomes a barrier, limiting the efficiency of both our body and mind. In our inner self, in our mind and heart, let us be aware of that given of old: There is set before us good and evil, life and death. (See Deut. 30:19.) We are given the choice. (See 816-3.)

Glory of the Body

May we never lose sight of that which is the whole purpose of the body. The body is the dwelling place of the soul, which through the mind expresses itself in materiality.

The actions of our body are one with Creative Energy ... so long as we perform acts of helpfulness, of love, of patience, and of kindness; but when we seek the gratification of selfish desires and the exaltation of self, we become one with forces that bring doubts and fears. As we in any experience express the fruits of the spirit of a living God, we grow, unfold, and manifest the purpose for which we were created.

What is evil? It is good misapplied, good used to satisfy the desires of self. So is sin, so is illness. They are caused by not being at-one with God, who helps us, while in the body, to become a force for good and a perfect channel for the manifestation of righteousness among all. The glory of the body, then, is selflessness.

Glory of the Soul

Our soul is a portion of the Divine. It is a moving influence in our activities throughout our experiences in all spheres of consciousness. Our soul is a universe within self. Will is an attribute of the soul, and with it we choose to develop either to a oneness with Universal Consciousness or in opposition to it.

The three phases of our human experience-body, mind, soul-are expressed in the earth, and their freedom comes in a threefold manner through knowledge, interpretation, and application. All of

these work together and depend each upon the other. In service, without thought of personal gain, comes that which makes for the greater growth of our soul. Tie that is greatest among you shall be your servant." Our physical, mental and spiritual bodies-each in its own phase of expression-must find, from experience, that which will keep them in accord with the purposes for which they entered into physical being.

Why are we pulled by the material, mental, and spiritual urges, while always something deep within keeps us trying to go forward? What is it that makes us KNOW that we must fight through obstacles and that will not let us give up? Are we fools that we keep working at something without any apparent material recompense, simply because we are urged from within? Why don't we give up, stop trying, and just let things and conditions run their course? Would not the final material results be the same? These questions often war within us. There is deep within us always the answer. The material results might be the same in the end; but what about the effect on our soul? Do we want to be guided by His Spirit, to be a portion of that Word which shall not pass away? If so, then indeed we are right to respond to the urge from within to "carry on," even though everything seems to contradict the practicality of doing so. He has given that we should not mind those things that will destroy the body, but those that will destroy the spirit and the soul. Even though all material things may be swept way, if we still have that urge from within, we are in touch with a glory which may not be found in any material substance or relationship.

Conclusion

In our dealings with our fellow human beings, let the law of the LORD, as we know it in our hearts, be the rule of our lives; and we will find that the growth of the mind-spiritual, the mind-mental, the mind-physical, will bring the glory of the Lord in our lives. God has promised to meet us within our holy temple, our body, as we purpose to give ourselves in service to our fellow humans; for in so doing we manifest the Glory of God in a material world. Let the Glory of the Father, of the Son, suffice us-not what we think, or what we say; for people look on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart. (See I Sam. 16:7.) In seeking to magnify Thy name, Thy glory, through that which Thou dost make manifest in me, O Lord, be Thou the guide, and-day by day, as the opportunity is given-let my hands, my mind, my body, do what Thou wouldst have me do as Thine own in the earth; and as I manifest through Thy love, the promises that Thou hast made in the Son, may Thy glory become known to others.

Lesson IX - Knowledge

Affirmation

Let the knowledge of the Lord So permeate my being that There is less and less of self, More and more of God, In my dealings with my fellow man; That the Christ may be in all, Through all, in His name. 262-95

[Based on Edgar Cayce readings 262-96 through 262-99]

Introduction

Seeking for knowledge has led us into the intricate tangle of physical existence. When the call, "Where art thou?" came to Adam, it brought the realization that God-given powers of creative thinking had been misused. Then fear and doubt became entrenched within our heart.

The first "don't" was: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam in his weakness made the choice which led him into tribulation, toil, and misunderstanding, for he did not choose the knowledge of good, but he chose the selfish use of the divine power of creative thought, which brought to him confusion, destruction and death. Humankind (a spiritual being), taking things into its own hands, still makes itself ridiculous in the eyes of its Maker by flaunting its knowledge of things that be, not even knowing that they have always been.

What is true knowledge? We have knowledge when we seek to express less and less of self and more and more of God in our dealings with our fellow human beings; for the expression of self is that which hinders us in gaining knowledge of the more perfect way. True knowledge is of God, not apart from God. It is shown fully in our unselfish dealings with our fellow humans day by day, as we manifest the spirit that we care, that we understand, and that we are willing to take a portion of their burden when they are bowed down with the cares of the world. It is being willing for Christ's sake to aid those in distress, to feed those who are hungry. The world is crying for this knowledge.

Knowledge is the ability that enables us to live in harmony with the laws of the universe. This again is known to us when we become selfless, and rid ourselves of the little differences that breed hate, contempt, and those things that hurt our fellow humans in our dealings with them. Do we understand that to forgive is knowledge, to be friendly is knowledge, to be selfless in the midst of a selfish world is knowledge? It takes an understanding of only one law to do these things, and this law is love.

Knowledge Is of God

God is Light and in Him there is no darkness at all. The Father judges us by our activities. We dwell then in the light as we study to show ourselves approved unto Him and are workers who are not ashamed of the things that will prove our sincerity and our earnestness. We know that as God is the Author of knowledge, He is the Supreme Judge of all, and that when we judge our fellow humans we are assuming the office of the Lord. "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?"

Knowledge Is Power

Knowledge is power, yet power may become an influence that brings evil, when it is not used constructively. Hence, let us become more and more aware of the desire to be the channels through whom God may carry out His will. Secular knowledge is man-made. The knowledge of God does not bind us to dogmas, or man-made beliefs; rather it sets us free.

Worldly knowledge causes many to become faint, many to fall away. Have we emptied ourselves of tradition, of malice and of hate? Do we encourage the weak, strengthen the fainthearted, and know that in such activities we gain a more perfect knowledge of God's way? In such application of knowledge we will find an understanding of ourselves, and learn to interpret ourselves in our relation to others, as well as in our relation to God.

In our study of the needs for cooperation we found the following statement: "Gaining an understanding of the laws that pertain to right living in all its phases makes our minds in attune with Creative Forces," which are in His Consciousness, One of the first of these laws is to know ourselves. In our lesson "Know Thyself," we approach the study of the physical body as a part of our own being. Here, in our lesson "Knowledge," we must turn to a study of the body as it relates to, and indeed pictures, the universe. We should know of the functioning of the organs which are constantly carrying on the processes of digestion, assimilation, and reconstruction of tissue, but it is more important that we should know something of the creative powers that operate through the spiritual centers. Such knowledge is power; for unless our knowledge brings to us as individuals an understanding of a regenerated life and an ability to live with others, we are failing to fulfill our destiny.

Interpretation of Self

Through the study of spiritual forces we learn that before we can know the world without, we must first know the world within. The physical person is of the earth; the soul-with the mind of the infinite-is of the universe. Souls choose to take physical bodies, and thus mind, which is of God, finds an expression in the physical.

Thus the study of self becomes our first consideration if we would be a good neighbor, a good parent, a good friend; and this means to look within to see if we have the knowledge that will help us to walk in the way of Him who is the Way, and to serve others, who as ourselves are made in His image.

Mind is defined as the rational faculty of humanity. It may be divided for convenience into the conscious, the subconscious, and the superconscious. We must not confuse the unconscious mind with the subconscious. The unconscious is but a deeper portion of our conscious thinking, through which the subconscious operates in the physical and acts upon and affects the conscious mind. It is through the mind that creative forces seek activity, whether in a lowly organism seeking to express itself, in us seeking a kingdom for ourselves, or in a soul seeking its way back to God. It is with the mind of the soul that we can be consciously aware that our physical body is the temple of the living God. With the will we choose for ourselves that activity which will either take us away from or to our Creator. It is active in both our conscious and subconscious minds. In the one it brings the ability to reason inductively and deductively, in the other to transcend and know, even as we are known.

Finally we turn to a brief study of the nature of our spiritual self. It has been said that the individual who would seek God must first believe that He is. It was Jesus who taught that the kingdom of God is within our own being. The God-spark within each of us is the force that enables us to love our enemies, to do good to them who persecute us, to pray for them who despitefully use us. Of ourselves we can do nothing; with Him we can do all things.

Our soul, a creation of the Father, constantly desires to glorify Him. Though we stumble blindly at times and often fall, yet, through suffering, we grow to understand and to give expression of our soul purpose by becoming channels through which the Father's will may be done in us.

Perhaps we have been afraid to "let go" and be absolutely happy. Whenever things have been almost perfect we would always think that it wouldn't last, that something would come to spoil it. This should not be our attitude. Although worldly cares and trials may be around us, when the question comes "Where art thou?" we should be ready to answer, "Here am I, Lord, use me."

We may often wonder in analyzing ourselves if we are right in what we believe, if we really know God, and if we have knowledge of Him that we can give to others. There is an answer: If we would know God, we must experience God; and as we experience Him, we become a guide to someone else. This should be to us the answer to every problem.

The Application of Knowledge

Knowledge, divine knowledge, that we had in the beginning, is needed in the affairs of our life. If we had only known the motive which prompted the act, the cause which brought about the unpleasant experience in the life of our neighbor, the severe test and trial which our wayward friend was experiencing, how differently we would have acted! Let us remember that to be kind is acting as if with foreknowledge. We never forget the one who understands us when we fail in the discharge of our duty. How like the Master is that one to us! Kindness is a simple act, but it is great enough to express divine knowledge.

Education is only the manner or the way [to reach the final goal]. Do not confuse the manner or the way with that of doing what ye do know! Not when there is a more convenient season, or "When I have attained unto a greater understanding I will do this or that." Knowledge, understanding, is using, then, that thou hast in hand. Not to thine own knowledge but that all hope, power, trust, faith, knowledge and understanding are in Him. Do that thou knowest to do today, as He would have thee do it, in thine understanding! Then tomorrow will be shown thee for that day! For as He has given, today ye may know the Lord! Now, if ye will but open thine heart, thine mind, the understanding and knowledge will come! 262-89

What is applicable to an individual is applicable to groups. It is like leaven; it leavens the whole. In groups, we will find differences of opinion, of thought, of interpretation, of development. We do not have true knowledge if we let such differences cause us to judge one another. The way of the Lord is hard only for those who become so fixed in ideas that they are not willing to be led by the Spirit of the Christ.

Knowledge must be applied in the affairs of nations. Have the World Wars made the world safe for democracy? Why not? Doubtless those who were trained in worldly knowledge felt confident that arms, power, and force were the things needed to bring about a Utopian condition. We, the nations, have to learn that the principles of peace and equal rights for all must come first in the hearts of individuals. They must begin with us. We cannot legislate goodness into the hearts of others while we live a life of selfishness.

It has been given that we shall love the Lord our God with all our heart, our soul, our mind, and our neighbor as ourselves. This is the basis of all spiritual law. Safety is founded in the knowledge of the spirit of truth, and the right application of that knowledge is just as effective in bringing its blessings to nations, as the misuse of it is in bringing about confusions among them.

Knowledge of universal laws brings clearer concepts of the purpose of creation. Without knowledge of that purpose we would have no reason for existence. We know that the misuse of

knowledge will wreck individuals as well as groups or nations. If we persist in the misuse, then that which seems to be worthwhile will fade, and spiritual decay will follow. Consider the person who worships money, the mob that takes law into its own hands, the nation that wars upon its neighbor; all in time reap that which they have sown.

Correct Evaluation of Knowledge

What experiences do we hold most sacred in our lives? Are they not such as the smile of someone we love, the thoughtful act of a friend, a kindness in time of trouble, a word of praise when things seem to be going wrong? Such knowledge brings spiritual growth. Worldly pleasures and physical gratifications bring excitement for the moment, but they do not last.

A kind word under trying circumstances not only creates for us an attunement with the "I Am" but makes others aware of the presence of the Lord. Our responsibility in applying the correct evaluation of knowledge cannot be overlooked. We should study to show self more practical in the application of that which we hold to be true. But if there are question marks here or there as to our sincerity and our consideration of others, trouble and discord will arise, bringing distressing experiences in our activities.

We are continually meeting ourselves. Would we have disappointments if we had not disappointed someone? Would we be despitely used if we had not within us some grudge or unkind thought of someone? The law is, that which we sow we shall reap. Though the heavens fall, the law will never change, for like begets like. Knowledge assures us of success; that is, if our purpose is in the Lord and not in our self. Knowledge used aright bears the fruit of the spirit.

No soul, no mind, can comprehend anything beyond its own understanding. Understanding is made perfect in virtue, and virtue is of God, Do we have it? If so, we see the Christ in others, and are filled with love, kindness and peace. To us is given the means to secure that which we need, not in doing someone else's job or attempting to do God's job, but in doing our own. This brings success that fills us with the fullness of a perfect life.

Knowledge of His Presence

We have been told to "Be still and know that I am God!" Do we ever try to pray and know that we are only uttering words? What is the trouble? Have we stepped aside, out of the strait and narrow way, and left God out of our life until we feel alone? God never breaks down doors to get in. He stands at the door and knocks. He is not past finding out, and with Him we can do all things; for His presence brings power and assurance into our lives. Then let the love of the Christ surround us, and let us glory in knowledge that we walk with Him, and that He sustains and strengthens us day by day.

Let us take no thought for tomorrow; for in His presence we shall find strength for each trial, each disturbance. He has promised that He has given His angels charge concerning us.

We must stand fast in Him, knowing, believing, acting that which we profess.

As ye have received, as ye are moved, as ye apply that ye receive, give to those that seek. Be patient, be kind. Speak not unkindly of anyone. Let not gossip nor unkind things, either in thought or deed, be in thine experience. And ye will find the true Knowledge of the Christ in the Father being close to thee. 262-98

Lesson X - Wisdom

Affirmation

Our Father, our God, may the light of Thy wisdom, of Thy strength, of Thy power, guide-as we would apply ourselves in Thy service for others. In His Name we seek. 262-102

[Based on Edgar Cayce readings 262-102 through 262-106]

Introduction

Wisdom is the ability to use knowledge aright. It is made practical by the application of the Christ life in our daily experiences.

This then is not a thing afar off. Not that ye would say as of old, who will bring down from heaven a message that we may know Wisdom, or who will come from over the sea that we may hear and understand; for Lo, it is in thine own heart; it is within thine own power, yea within thine own might! [See Deut. 30:11-14.] 262-104

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Not the fear of disappointment, of contention, of strife; for they are not of God. The wisdom of the Lord is exemplified for us in the life of Jesus who became the Christ; then, if we would have wisdom, we must abide in Him who is the Way. Have we been disappointed? Have our wishes, our desires failed to be fulfilled? We still are conquerors; for in Him we have strength and power and might. Let us remember "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

Our Lord taught that: If thy neighbor smite thee, turn the other cheek; if one takes away thy coat, let that one have thy cloak also; if someone forces thee to go one mile, go with that person two. In such teaching there is wisdom, for we are not hindered by the act, while our neighbor is blessed by being in the presence of the Divine. Nothing except the spirit of God within us can make us love our enemies. Do we say in our heart, "Yes, but this was the teaching of the Son of God, and He had the strength that is not within me"? We have the promise of the Son, "Lo, I am with you always," and through Him may do greater things than He did.

They that giveth a cup of water in the name of the Christ lose not their reward. It is not wisdom to give it that we may be well-spoken of, but rather that the glory of the Father may be made manifest. It is to the glory of the Father when love prompts the activity, when love prompts the desire to be a blessing to others. Then, we are co-workers with Him. This is wisdom, the wisdom that is of God.

Wisdom is first a matter of choice, of will in the light of that which is our ideal, and in the manner in which we apply it in our experience with others. The concept, the will, the application become a triune in the experience of each of us. If, however, in the application we become selfless, exalt the Prince of Peace, and seek the glory of the Father, we will find ourselves in His consciousness. This is the true approach; this is the beginning of wisdom. Knowledge of the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. The whole law is to love God with all our mind, our body, our soul-and our neighbor as ourself; that He, the Father, in the Son may be exalted.

We are commanded to use that which we have in hand and more will be given to meet our needs, whether they are mental, material, or spiritual.

The Approach to Wisdom

Ye [would not have] known sin unless the Son had come and shown thee the Way. [See John 15:22.] 262-104

He is the pattern of perfection. We, as He, in seeking to know the wisdom of the Father, are brought to an understanding through patience, long-suffering, and love of others. The knowledge of God, the wisdom of God, applied in our daily experience bring strength and harmony; even the turmoils of the earth-sorrow, shame, want, and degradation-become worthwhile experiences, if we meet them in the wisdom of God.

Where strife, turmoil, self-glory and self-exaltation are, there is no true wisdom of God. If we would have love, then we must show love; if we would have peace, we must be peaceable; if we would bring about a greater and closer association with the Divine, we must so act that there be no questioning in the minds of others as to our purpose in life. There is no shortcut to wisdom; it must be lived.

Let Us Examine Ourselves

We must become more aware that we cannot bear the crosses of life alone, and that the Father in His wisdom has given to us an example, a promise, a friend, a sharer of all our crosses; even the Son of man, who learned through experience... what it meant to bear a cross.

In wisdom, thou wilt not find fault. In wisdom, thou wilt not condemn any. In wisdom, thou wilt not cherish grudges. In wisdom thou wilt love those, even those that despitefully use thee; even those that speak unkindly. 262-105

When we claim the promises of God, many changes that we cannot understand may take place in our lives. These experiences may help us to know the Wisdom of God.

When we profess with our mouth that which we have purposed in our heart to do, that is wisdom. When the acts of the body, when the thoughts of the mind are in accord with that we proclaim to our children, our neighbors, our friends, that is wisdom.

"When I lost my home with most of my earthly possessions, a struggle went on within me. I was disappointed with myself for not being able to rise above the conditions that enveloped me. I was disappointed with my friends, who appeared so indifferent to my sufferings. My usual hopeful attitude slowly slipped from me. How I longed to be comforted! I tried to realize that this experience was for my good, and that it was God's way to teach me patience.

"It took this experience to help me understand, and realize that we learn obedience through suffering."

Then make thy paths straight. Let thy conversation, thy wishes, thy desires be rather as one with Him who thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

Ye know the way. Do ye stumble in ignorance or in selfishness? Do ye doubt for the gratifying of thy body or for the fulfilling of the body-appetites?

Ye know the way. Let, then, that love of the Infinite fire thee to action, to doing! And indeed live as hath been shown. 262-105

Our applications of these truths should be practical in our everyday life, and not merely tenets or sayings that pass away. As we live them, they become living, enduring realities. Remember, to obtain wisdom we must apply that which we know.

Application of Wisdom

In our seeking for wisdom we come to the place where our will, the faculties of our mind, the faculties of our spiritual forces, must be divinely directed, if we would go on in the correct application of knowledge.

Wisdom is divine love manifested in our conversation, in our avocation, in all our acts.

For as ye apply day by day that ye know, then is the next step, the next act, the next experience, shown thee. Because thou hast then failed here or there, do not say, "Oh, I cannot-I am weak." To be sure, thou art weak in self, but O ye of little faith! For He is thy STRENGTH! THAT is Wisdom! Let no one then again ever say "I cannot" It's rather, if ye do, saying "I WILL not-I want MY way." This is foolishness; and ye know the Way. For He is Strength, He is Love, He is Patience, He is Knowledge, He is Wisdom.

Claim ALL of these, then, in HIM! For He is in thee, and the Father hath not desired that any soul should perish but hath prepared a way of escape, a way of love, of peace, of harmony, for every soul-if ye will but claim same, live same, in Him. 262-104

Would we have wisdom without preparation? Would we have glory without purification? Would we enjoy happiness without being able to comprehend and understand it? How may we make a practical application of wisdom? JUST GO THE WHOLE WAY WITH OUR MASTER. We should not preach that which we do not ourselves practice. We should not insist upon others trying in their experience that which we have not tried.

TRY in thine own experience, each; that ye speak not for one whole day unkindly of any; that ye say not a harsh word to any; about any; and see what a day would bring to you... 262-106

"I dreamed that I was with a great company of people. We seemed to be in the temple at Jerusalem. I was to make pictures of the people. Later Jesus and some of His followers came in, but not through the door that we had entered. He, too, came to have His picture made. He said to me, 'You can make the picture of Jesus, but can you make the picture of the Christ?'

"Then I knew that the picture of Christ could only be reflected to my fellow humans by the life I lived. And so it is with each of us; we know the Christ and introduce Him to our neighbors by the way we speak, the way we think, the way we act. To apply that which we know to be good is wisdom. To love the Lord our God with all our hearts, all our minds and all our souls and our neighbors as ourselves is wisdom, and when anything less is practiced, it brings into our experience sin and sorrow and finally death."

Then the practical application of the Christ-life in thy daily experience is Wisdom indeed.

This then is not a thing afar off. Not that ye would say as of old, who will bring down from heaven a message that we may know Wisdom, or who will come from over the sea that we may hear and understand; for Lo, it is in thine own heart; it is within thine own power, yea within thine own might! *It is the application of that thou knowest to do in light of the Pattern set in the Christ. That is applied wisdom! 262-104*

Lesson XI - Happiness

Affirmation

Our Father, our God, in my own consciousness let me find happiness in the love of Thee, for the love I bear toward my fellow man. Let my life, my words, my deeds, bring the joy and happiness of the Lord in Jesus to each I meet day by day. 262-106

[Based on Edgar Cayce readings 262-107 through 262-112]

What Is Happiness?

Happiness is abiding in Infinite Love. To be happy we must make Infinite Love compatible with our material surroundings. No one can give it to us, no one can take it away. We manifest it in thankfulness, peace, harmony, and in a consciousness that is void of offense toward God and others. Happiness is knowing, being in touch with, and manifesting divine love in our daily life. Happiness is as much a law as error or goodness, as day or night. The first law is: Like begets like. That which we think, we become. As in the act, as in the seed, so in the full fruit of that which we allow our mind to dwell upon, that we become. Happy are they who love the Lord's way. (See 262-109.)

Who Are Happy?

Happy are the poor in spirit, for they shall see God. We are happy when we in humility realize the goodness of the Father, the depth of His love, and allow ourselves to be directed by the God-Force. But when we become acquainted with "familiar spirits," we dishonor the God who has promised to abide with us always.

Happy are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. We have a thirst for spiritual satisfaction that only the Spirit of God can supply. We have an advocate with the Father God, in Jesus Christ, and in such knowledge we have comfort. Though we may feel sorrow for others in their unrighteousness, yet we are happy when we can bless those whom our Lord smiles upon in their weaknesses.

Happy are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." The unseen forces are working the great changes in the earth and its people today. Those who are quiet, cool and unpretentious are the makers and the keepers of the coming age who will bring light and understanding to many. Blessed are those who, without thought of self, go forward, build homes, hospitals, cities, that generations to come may be blessed. These are they who inherit the earth. What we give away, we have, is as true as what we hold, we lose, or what we have lost was never ours.

Happy are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find." It is a fearful thing for us to be at ease, to feel self-sufficient and not to realize that we, of ourselves, can do nothing. It is glorious to come to an understanding of our relationship with our Heavenly Father and with our fellow human beings. We are happy who realize that the fountain of knowledge, of peace and of righteousness is overflowing, and that our thirst can be forever satisfied in Him who is the Water of Life.

Happy are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Father, "forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." If we forgive not our neighbors their trespasses, how can we hope to be forgiven? To forgive and to be merciful are Godlike. To hold grudges, to want revenge, to pout and to sulk, are

of the earth, and they have no part in the Kingdom of the Father. Happy are the merciful, for they have the promise that their needs will be met.

Happy are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Unless ye become as a little child, ye shall not see the Kingdom of God. There is no evil in the mind of a little child. The prisoner before the bar is to the child a good person. Unless we, too, can see God in our fellow human being, we will never see Him elsewhere. This is our first step toward God, and there is no roundabout way. There is no happiness within us when we are holding an impure thought of another.

Happy are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." In the world of uneasiness and turmoils, this is a happy state of consciousness; yet peace will not remain long within if there is no effort to express it without. Happy are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also." This is another way of saying that we should go all the way in being kind and gentle to others. Because we have little, do we often say that we must save, so that we may not be in want? Let us remember that there may be those who now need what little we hold. We may say, if I were so and so, oh, how much I would give to charity, to the needy! If we would not share the little we have, we would not give although we had everything at our command.

When we are persecuted for righteousness' sake and are conscious that it is for His sake, the light which brings happiness shines into the darkest corner of our life. When we can realize that the place we fill and the work we do is not only a livelihood, but a means through which others may come to a better understanding of life, then the little slurs, the insults, the criticisms lose much of the sting they would otherwise carry. Love comes more easily and forgiveness is given before it is asked, when we are happy to suffer for righteousness' sake.

Happy are you "when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; ... for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."

When Are We Happy?

When the Lord's will becomes our will, we are happy, for we begin to know the Lord in our daily life. Do we think that Jesus went happily to the cross, or that He went happily from the garden where there had been apparently so little consideration of what the moment meant as He wrestled with self? With all the sadness that this experience gave Him, He was happy in knowing that He would show the world a way out of sin. Do we worry over the shortcomings of those we love? How was He with those He loved? He gave them only His blessings, never His censure. As we follow His example we are happy.

Moments of discouragement will arise in our experience. We may expect them; such seem necessary for our training. It need be that offenses come, but woe to that one by whom they come. Let mercy and patience keep each of us lest we forget our opportunities.

Happiness is found in the mind and heart of those who without thought of self seek to know the way of God. It cannot be bought. It cannot be learned. It must be earned. No one can take it from us, but we may, through misuse, lose it. Let our daily prayer be:

Our Father, our God, in my own consciousness let me find happiness in the love of Thee, for the love I bear toward my fellow man. Let my life, my words, my deeds, bring the joy and happiness of the Lord in Jesus to each I meet day by day. 262-106

Pleasure Is Not Happiness

How often we confuse pleasure with happiness. We see those of the world seemingly enjoying every pleasure that luxury can give, yet many have sad faces and heavy hearts.

Pleasure is of the world; it is something outside of us. It is fleeting, deceiving and unsatisfying. It gives no reward but asks a heavy toll as we pass over the bridge of unrealized dreams. Solomon declared, "I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits... Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do: and... then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness."

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Let us think on the difference between pleasure and happiness, for they are as the material and the spiritual. Through pleasure we seek to gratify physical desires, but when we have lost sight of self in the appreciation of love, beauty and hope in the Creative Forces, may we indeed know happiness.

The road to Gethsemane, to the minds of those who looked upon their own Gethsemane, was a road of thorns. Yet the Lord's kind words, spoken on the way to His Calvary, brought happiness to a dying world, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Happiness is found in Infinite and Divine Love. Infinite Love is the love of God. Love Divine is that manifested by those who in their activities are guided by infinite love. They are one in Him. They bring happiness, not mere pleasure as is found in material things.

We should find happiness in just sowing the seed. Some will fall on stony ground, to be sure; some by the wayside, some among the thorns and briars; but many will fall on good soil. Then we must keep the faith, knowing that God gives the increase.

We must show ourselves worthy of Him who will guide us in our daily activities. Our greatest opportunities for service are found in being kind, speaking gently, and smiling often. Let the love of the Father through such activities shine in our life day by day. Then the clouds of doubt will dissipate.

If we put first things first, with the proper evaluation of material, mental, and spiritual forces, our life will be a life of harmony, happiness, and joy. Others will be aware of our relationships to our God as we patiently sow the seeds of love.

Conclusion

Truth brings freedom, and freedom brings happiness. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." In truth we do not bind others, neither do we exalt self.

Selfishness is the only sin. All others are just modifications of the expression of the ego. So close is the ego, the I am, to the Great I Am, that the confusions of duties and privileges and opportunities become enmeshed in our experiences. Many of us in the turmoils of life have lost

sight of the proper evaluation of our activities in our relationship to individuals as well as to groups, and fail to consider it our duty to give the help which might enable others to overcome sorrow, fear or worry.

Then if we would have life, we must give life; if we would have friends, we must be friendly. In fields of activity let us draw nigh unto that which is good and think not only of material gains, but of how great a service we may be to our fellow human being! For in so doing we serve our Maker. (See 267-182.)

Lesson XII - Spirit

Affirmation

Father, God, in Thy mercy, in Thy love, be Thou with us now. For we know and we speak of Thy love. And help us then to put away, for the hour, the cares of this life; that we may know in truth that the Spirit and the Lamb say, "Come." Let them that hear also say, "Come." Let all that will, come and drink of the water of life. 262-113

[Based on Edgar Cayce readings 262-113 through 262-124]

Introduction

Spirit is FIRST CAUSE, the essence of Creative Power, the source of light, and the motivating influence of all life. It is God.

Let us not be confused by terms. What are the relationships among such terms as: The spirit of the times, the spirit of the age, the spirit of America, the spirit of '76, the spirit of the pioneer, the spirit of Fascism, the spirit of the earth, the spirit of the departed, the spirit of the church, the spirit of Truth, the Spirit of the Christ, the SPIRIT OF GOD?

It has been given that there is One Spirit. All manifestations of life in any plane of consciousness are crystallizations by Spirit.

When we, through exercising free will, choose to misdirect and divert this power into selfish channels of personal aggrandizement, rather than toward the expression of its original impulse, the glorification of the Creator, then sin comes into existence.

The spirit of the pioneer need not signify cruelty and destruction nor the spirit of strife and hate, but spirit beings encased in the physical seeking freedom as an ideal. All force is one force. It is we who brought diversity of expression and perception, and we through the Way must return to unity. "Get thee behind me, Satan ... for thou savourest not the things that be of God [the Spirit], but those that be of men." These words were spoken by Jesus, when two ways were before Him: self-glory, or the glory of God.

We must understand why and how Spirit came into material manifestation. Where did we come from?

... we must know from whence we came, how, why, and whence we go-and why. 262-114

In the Beginning

God created us in His image, spiritual beings, with souls, minds and wills. In all states of consciousness there are opportunities for the expression of these.

Error came into existence before the earth, the heavens, or space were created. Using free will, expressing selfish desire, spiritual beings (souls) separated themselves from a consciousness of Oneness with Creative Will. Life, in material bodies, is the reflection of this separation in this state of consciousness.

Through the law of love, God prepared a way back (a road, a ladder, a knotted rope) for all humankind. Until this way was prepared there was no consciousness of time or space. These

concepts are aids, not hindrances, to a clearer perception of the Divine Will; for through time and space, and patience, we will come to know the Lighted Path.

Only those who seek may find this way. Flesh and blood may not reveal the truth to us. It is the quickening of the Divine Spirit within which brings each personal revelation.

Humanity's Projection

The Children of God became the children of men, as they sought selfish expression into the earth plane. They pushed themselves into matter, upsetting existent patterns of evolution going on in the earth; first, as forces seeking expression through the natural elements of mineral, plant and animal life, then, as hardened thought forms molded after the pattern of animal life in the earth. In these thought forms spiritual beings became entangled. They lost the consciousness of their divine origin. Monstrosities resulted. There was chaos. The darkness which existed is beyond the comprehension of the finite mind. The earth plane was only a three-dimensional point of expression for the chaotic state which existed.

God's Projection

Out of this mire of selfish thought, this morass of illusion, God prepared a way through the law of love.

He said, "Let there be light." Let there be the consciousness of time and space. The evening and the morning were the first day, a day of light and darkness, of good and evil. Step by step spiritual beings became aware that they were away from God, from light.

Jesus, as the first Adam, became the symbol of the regenerated spiritual beings returning to God Consciousness. He came showing the way of patience by which we (spiritual beings) were to recognize His state and turn toward the Light. The law of One was manifested eventually in the man Jesus, and is signified in the Christ Consciousness. (Let us get the difference.)

Adam and Eve, God's projection, began a line of physical descent through which spiritual beings could purify their desires, and return to God Consciousness. This is the true source of the legends of the chosen race, the pure race, preserved in the legends of the peoples of every continent. In the early days spiritual beings who used these Adamic bodies were tempted and many gave way to desire. "... the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose."

Down through the ages there existed side by side the sons and daughters of mortals (the hardened thought forms mingled with animal bodies) and the Sons and Daughters of God (offspring of the Adamic race).

Through the example set by the Christ, we know the way. The choice is made daily by each soul to follow the Light or seek selfish gratification. Now, as in the beginning, each individual is meeting himself or herself. When we act without thought as to motive or purpose, experiences result which may bring ease and comforts for a time, but when our activities are selfish indulgences and suppressions of our fellow humans, we will reap that which we have sown.

As we were created for companionship with the Father, being a portion of First Cause, it behooves us in materiality to manifest more and more our awareness of this relationship in our mental, physical and spiritual bodies. We must fulfill the purpose for which we came into the earth plane, that is, to be again one with the Father, which is attained through the Christ Consciousness. Therefore, through the power of the Christ, who has walked the path from the beginning, we will

come to know ourselves to be ourselves, yet one with and part of, the whole, yet not the Whole. That is the purpose, that is the cause, of Being.

Time, Space and Patience

The Spirit of God in material understanding is Time, Space and Patience. While they are only literal terms to the consciousness of the finite mind, they are a part of experience in materiality and should be considered as attributes of Creative Force. In understanding time, we better understand God. No other concept can bring such a consciousness of unity as an inner flash of the universality of time.

Every day is the beginning and the ending of a new opportunity. Every opportunity has its beginning and end, thus making way for greater physical manifestation of spiritual ideals. Every new experience is another Garden of Eden into which we have moved. Every day is the awareness of the evening and the morning being the first day. To remain in Eden or to be driven out depends upon ourselves; as to how we use our power of choice. Every moment we are just beginning to live. We are never too old to begin, if we remember that in our weakness we may be strong in Christ.

God is reflected in our concept of space. In the vastness of space our self-conceit falters. We are humblest when gazing at the stars. We draw nearer to God in contemplation of the immensity of the universe.

The goodness and mercy of God are shown most in patience. To be patient is God-like; for patience is a spiritual force which may be given material expression through our attitude toward our fellow human beings. Jesus said that in patience we come to possess our souls. We become aware of the continuity of life as we are patient. As finite beings we can express no more God-like quality than patience.

Time, space and patience are three concepts which contain the keys to spiritual development in this three-dimensional plane. Without them fallen humanity is not aware of being away from God. They are the eye openers, the Voice of God speaking in the burning bush, "day unto day uttering speech, night unto night showing knowledge." (See Ps. 19:2.)

Using time and space and patience we measure everything, physical, mental and spiritual. When we begin to catch a glimpse of the fact that all space exists in time, that all time is one, that all force is one, that all force is God, we will be getting back to the Oneness of which Christ was speaking when He said that He would be in the Father and we would be in Him. This realization comes to us only in patience.

Self the Barrier

Selfishness is the influence which blocks our return to God Consciousness.

We must begin to build up within ourselves that mind which was in the Christ, if we would know God. The choice is ours. He has set before us this day good and evil. He is "not willing that any should perish," but that all should know the truth; "and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Is God not the God of the heaven, the universe? Should He not be God of the nation, the state, the home? What moves us to find fault with our neighbor, to cause inharmonies in home, in the state, in the nation? What are we doing in our daily conversations and actions to express our recognition of the One Spirit? Are we letting selfishness block the way, or are we being led by the Spirit of Truth?

The Spirit of the Christ cannot abide in a selfish heart. We drive Christ from our homes, from our churches, from our state- yes, from our own consciousness when we seek self-glory. It was the cause of the first turning away from God. It was the first sin.

Experiences

"It was Christmas Eve. The day's work was done. I was tired, so I lay down for a moment to reflect. I hadn't had much money to spend for the things that generally go to make Christmas Day happy. I began to look back on the day's work. In service I had done my best to make others happy. I had tried to be unselfish."

"When I thought of myself again, I realized that my body was entirely rested, although I had been lying down only a few moments. Is it possible, I thought, that true rest comes from the realization of a selfless life? If so, I had made the demonstration; no great demonstration, to be sure, but one to me, that was the natural result of being selfless for one day."

"During the first part of a spiritual discourse, which was a wonderful explanation of conditions of the world, I was following closely the questions that were being asked. Then, it seemed that I was up somewhere, high (unaware of being a person-just a 'consciousness'). I was looking down on a most beautiful, broad river, composed of flowing bubbles. It looked so smooth and almost musical- as the bubbles rolled on, around and over each other. I realized that the bubbles were PEOPLE! They, the bubbles, finally reached a place where they burst, and all seemed to be one. I thought It is the River of Life! We, too, in the end will merge into the Whole; for we are one."

Conclusion

We are constantly meeting that which we have measured unto others, as well as unto ourselves. The fruits we sow we must reap. If we disobey the laws pertaining to cleanliness, or the natural laws of nature, do we not meet the result in ourselves? Just so, it is with our mental and spiritual environment or association. To whom do we accredit these influences that are so much a part of our mental abilities and faculties if not to self's choice?

Let us know in whom we believe, and who is the author of our desires. Are our desires creative or destructive? "Father, let Thy desires be my desires. Let my desires, God, be Thy desires, in spirit and in truth," (262-60) should be our prayer. Thus we find grace, mercy, peace, and harmony becoming more and more a part of our experience. We love others, not merely because they love us, but because it brings harmony and hope into our own experience as we recognize God in our neighbor.

Our religion, our love for our fellow human beings, our love for our Creator should be a living experience, not just form. Truth, as mercy and grace, GROWS through use. As we manifest the fruits of the spirit in our dealings with our fellow humans, we fulfill that purpose for which we are called. We show forth the love we hold for our Maker by the manner in which we deal with our neighbor. God's love has manifested again and again in the earth showing us that by love, not hate and force, a soul may be brought to an awareness of its spiritual reality.

If we would be miserable, then let us think only of self. If we would know happiness, then be a friend to someone. If we would know the love of God, then show love to those who seek, to those who condemn. Be joyous in the Lord, knowing that He is ever present when we seek His face. He is ever with us when we desire to be an emissary that others may know what it means to walk and talk with Him.

When we efface self and seek only to be led by His Spirit, then and only then may we hope to do our part in the scheme of redemption. Let us analyze our desires, our purposes, put away from our mind, our heart, our experience, those things that would make us afraid, and know that the true spirit of creative influence is WITHIN.

That which has a beginning must have an ending. Hence rebellion, selfishness, and hate, must be wiped away, and with them must go sorrow, tears and sadness. ONLY GOOD is everlasting. It is the Spirit of God that moved over the face of the earth, and gives this Spirit the charge concerning His own. Are we His own?

He has committed to us the keeping of His sheep, the tending of His lambs, until He comes and makes an accounting with each of us.

Where, O Where, will we be? (See 262-114.)

End book II