

Chapter 19

BEYOND THE BODY

We said before that, when a situation has been dedicated wholly to truth, peace is inevitable. Its attainment is the criterion by which the wholeness of the dedication can be safely assumed. Yet we also said that peace without faith will NEVER be attained, for what is wholly dedicated to truth as its only goal is brought to truth BY faith. This faith encompasses everyone involved, for only thus the situation is perceived as meaningful and as a whole. And everyone must be involved in it, or else your faith is limited, and your dedication incomplete.

Every situation, properly perceived, becomes an opportunity to heal the Son of God. And he is healed BECAUSE you offered faith to him, giving him to the Holy Spirit and releasing him from every demand your ego would make of him. Thus do you see him free, and in this vision does the Holy Spirit share. And since He shares it He has given it, and so He heals through YOU. It is this joining Him in a united purpose which makes this purpose real because you make it WHOLE. And this IS healing. The body is healed, because you came without it and joined the Mind in which all healing rests.

Healing and the Mind

The body cannot heal, because it cannot make itself sick. It NEEDS no healing. Its health or sickness depends entirely on how the mind perceives it, and the purpose which the mind would use it FOR. And it is obvious that a segment of the mind CAN see itself as separated from the Universal Purpose. When this occurs, the body becomes its weapon, used AGAINST this Purpose to demonstrate the "fact" that separation has occurred. The body thus becomes the instrument of illusion, acting accordingly; seeing what is not there, hearing what truth has never said, and behaving insanely, being imprisoned BY insanity.

Do not overlook our earlier statement that faithlessness leads straight to illusions. For faithlessness is the perception of a brother as a body, and the body cannot be used for purposes of union. If, then, you see your brother AS a body, you have established a condition in which uniting

with him becomes impossible. Your faithlessness to him has separated you from him, and kept you BOTH apart from being healed. Your faithlessness has thus opposed the Holy Spirit's purpose, and brought illusions, centered on the BODY, to stand between you. And the body WILL seem to be sick, for you have made of it an "enemy" of healing, and the opposite of truth.

It cannot be difficult to realize that faith must be the opposite of faithlessness. Yet the difference in how they operate is less apparent, though it follows directly from the fundamental difference in what they are. Faithlessness would always limit and attack; faith would remove all limitations and make whole. Faithlessness would interpose illusions between the Son of God and his Creator; faith would remove all obstacles that seem to rise between them. Faithlessness is wholly dedicated to illusions; faith wholly to truth. Partial dedication is impossible. Truth is the ABSENCE of illusion; illusion the ABSENCE of truth.

Both cannot BE together, nor perceived in the same place. To dedicate yourself to both is to set up a goal forever impossible to attain, for part of it is sought through the body, thought of as a means for seeking out reality through attack, while the other part would heal, and therefore calls upon the mind and NOT the body. The inevitable compromise is the belief that the BODY must be healed, and NOT the mind. For this divided goal has given both an equal reality, which could be possible only if the mind is limited to the body, and divided into little parts of seeming wholeness, but without connection. This will not harm the body, but it WILL keep the delusional thought system in the MIND.

Here, then, is healing needed. And it is here that healing IS. For God gave healing not APART from sickness, nor established remedy where sickness cannot be. They are TOGETHER, and when they are SEEN together, all attempts to keep both truth and illusion in the mind, where both MUST be, are recognized as dedication to ILLUSION; and given up when brought to

truth, and seen as totally unreconcilable with truth, in any respect or in any way.

Truth and illusion have NO connection. This will remain forever true, however much you seek to connect them. But illusions are ALWAYS connected, as is truth. Each is united, a complete thought system, but totally disconnected to each other. Where there is no overlap, there separation must be complete. And to perceive this is to recognize where separation IS, and where it must be healed. The result of an idea is never separate from its source. The IDEA of separation produced the body, and remains connected to it, making it sick because of its identification with it. You think you are protecting the body by hiding this connection, for this concealment seems to keep your identification safe from the "attack" of truth.

If you but understood how much this strange concealment has hurt your mind, and how confused your own identification has become because of it! You do not see how great the devastation wrought by your faithlessness. For faithlessness is an attack which seems to be justified by its RESULTS. For by withholding faith, you see what IS unworthy of it, and cannot look beyond the barrier to what is joined with you.

To have faith is to heal. It is the sign that you have accepted the Atonement for yourself, and would therefore share it. By faith, you offer the gift of freedom from the past, which YOU received. You do not use anything your brother has done before to condemn him NOW. You freely choose to overlook his errors, looking past all barriers between your self and his, and seeing them as one. And in that one you see your faith is fully justified. There IS no justification for faithlessness, but faith is ALWAYS justified.

Faith is the opposite of fear, as much a part of love as fear is of attack. Faith is the acknowledgement of union. It is the gracious acknowledgment of everyone as a Son of your most loving Father, loved by Him like

you, and therefore loved by you as yourself. It is His Love that joins you, and for His Love you would keep no-one separate from YOURS. Each one appears just as he is perceived in the holy instant, united in your purpose to be released from guilt. You saw the Christ in him, and he was healed because you looked on what makes faith forever justified in everyone.

Faith is the gift of God, through Him Whom God has given you. Faithlessness looks upon the Son of God, and judges him unworthy of forgiveness. But through the eyes of faith, the Son of God is seen ALREADY forgiven, free of all the guilt he laid upon himself. Faith sees him only NOW because it looks not to the past to judge him, but would see in him only what it would see in YOU. It sees not through the body's eyes, nor looks to bodies for its justification. It is the messenger of the new perception, sent forth to gather witnesses unto its coming, and to return their messages to you. Faith is as easily exchanged for knowledge as is the real world. For faith arises from the Holy Spirit's perception, and is the sign you share it with Him. Faith is a gift you offer to the Son of God through Him, and wholly acceptable to his Father as to him. And therefore offered YOU.

Your holy relationship, with its new purpose, offers you faith to give unto each other. Your faithlessness had driven you apart, and so you did not recognize salvation in each other. Yet faith UNITES you in the holiness you see, not through the body's eyes, but in the sight of Him Who joined you, and in Whom YOU are united. Grace is not given to a body, but to a MIND. And the mind that receives it looks instantly beyond the body, and sees the holy place where it was healed. THERE is the altar where the grace was given, in which it stands. Do you, then, offer grace and blessing to each other, for you stand at the same altar, where grace was laid for BOTH of you. And be you healed by grace together, that YOU may heal through faith

In the holy instant, you stand before the altar God has raised unto Himself and BOTH of you. Lay faithlessness aside, and come to it

together. There will you see the miracle of your relationship as it was made again through faith. And there it is that you will realize that there is nothing faith cannot forgive. No error interferes with its calm sight, which brings the miracle of healing with equal ease to ALL of them. For what the messengers of love are sent to do THEY DO, returning the glad tidings that it was done to you who stand together before the altar from which they were sent forth.

As faithlessness will keep your little kingdoms barren and separate, so will faith help the Holy Spirit prepare the ground for the most holy garden which He would make of it. For faith brings peace, and so it calls on truth to enter and make lovely what has already been prepared for loveliness. Truth follows faith and peace, completing the process of making lovely which they begin. For faith is still a learning goal, no longer needed when the lesson has been learned. Yet truth will stay forever.

Let, then, your dedication be to the eternal, and learn how NOT to interfere with it and make it slave to time. For what you think you do to the eternal you do to YOU. Whom God created as His Son is slave to nothing, being lord of all along with his Creator. You can enslave a body, but an IDEA is free, incapable of being kept in prison, or limited in any way except by the mind that thought it. For it remains joined to its source, which is its jailor or its liberator, according to which it chooses as its purpose for itself.

Sin versus Error

It is essential that error be not confused with "sin," and it is this distinction which makes salvation possible. For error can be corrected, and the wrong made right. But sin, were it possible, would be irreversible. The belief in sin is necessarily based on the firm conviction that MINDS, not bodies, can attack. And thus the mind IS guilty, and will forever so remain unless a mind not part of it can give it absolution. Sin calls for punishment as error for correction, and the belief that punishment IS correction is clearly insane.

Sin is not an error, for sin entails an arrogance which the idea of error lacks. To sin would be to violate reality, and to SUCCEED. Sin is the proclamation that attack is real and guilt is justified. It assumes the Son of God is guilty, and has thus succeeded in losing his innocence, and making himself what God created not. Thus is creation seen as not eternal, and the Will of God open to opposition and defeat. Sin is the "grand illusion" underlying all the ego's grandiosity. For by it, God Himself is changed and rendered incomplete.

The Son of God can be mistaken; he can deceive himself; he can even turn the power of his mind against himself. But he CANNOT sin. There is nothing he can do that would REALLY change his reality in any way, nor make him really guilty. That is what sin would do, for such is its purpose. Yet for all the wild insanity inherent in the whole idea of sin, it is IMPOSSIBLE. For the wages of sin IS death, and how can the immortal die?

A major tenet in the ego's insane religion is that sin is not error but TRUTH, and it is INNOCENCE that would deceive. Purity is seen as arrogance, and the acceptance of the self as sinful is perceived as holiness. And it is this doctrine which replaces the reality of the Son of God as his Father created him, and willed that he be forever. Is this humility? Or is it, rather, an attempt to wrest creation AWAY from truth, and keep it separate?

Any attempt to re-interpret sin as error is always indefensible to the ego. The idea of sin is wholly sacrosanct to its thought system, and

quite unapproachable except through reverence and awe. It is the most "holy" concept in the ego's system; lovely and powerful, wholly true, and necessarily protected with every defense at its disposal. For here lies its "best" defense, which all the others serve. Here is its armor, its protection, and the fundamental purpose of the special relationship in its interpretation.

It can indeed be said the ego made its world on sin. Only in such a world could everything be upside-down. This is the strange illusion which makes the clouds of guilt seem heavy and impenetrable. The solidness this world's foundation seems to have is found in this. For sin has changed creation from an Idea of God to an ideal the ego wants; a world IT rules, made up of bodies, mindless and capable of complete corruption and decay. If this is a mistake, it can be undone easily by truth. Any mistake can be corrected, if truth be left to judge it. But if the mistake is given the STATUS of truth, to what can it be brought? The "holiness" of sin is kept in place by just this strange device. As truth it is inviolate, and everything is brought to IT for judgment. As a mistake, IT must be brought to truth. It is impossible to have faith in sin, for sin IS faithlessness. Yet it IS possible to have faith that a mistake can be corrected.

There is no stone in all the ego's embattled citadel more heavily defended than the idea that sin is real; the natural expression of what the Son of God has made himself to be, and what he IS. To the ego, this is NO MISTAKE. For this IS its reality; this is the "truth" from which escape will always be impossible. This is his past, his present and his future. For he has somehow managed to corrupt his Father, and changed His Mind completely. Mourn, then, the death of God, Whom sin has killed! And this would be the ego's wish, which in its madness it thinks it has ACCOMPLISHED.

Would you not RATHER that all this be nothing more than a mistake, entirely correctable, and so easily escaped from that its whole correction is like walking through a mist into the sun? For that is all it is. Perhaps

you would be tempted to agree with the ego that it is far better to be sinful than mistaken. Yet think you carefully before you allow yourself to make this choice. Approach it not lightly, for it IS the choice of hell or Heaven.



### The Unreality of Sin

The attraction of guilt is found in sin, not error. Sin will be repeated BECAUSE of this attraction. Fear can become so acute that the sin is denied the acting out, but while the guilt remains attractive the mind will suffer, and not let go of the idea of sin. For guilt still calls to it, and the mind hears it and yearns for it, making itself a willing captive to its sick appeal. Sin is an idea of evil that CANNOT be corrected, and will be forever desirable. As an essential part of what the ego thinks you are, you will ALWAYS want it. And only an avenger, with a mind unlike your own, could stamp it out through fear.

The ego does not think it possible that love, not fear, is really called upon by sin, and always ANSWERS. For the ego brings sin to FEAR, demanding punishment. Yet punishment is but another form of guilt's protection for what is deserving punishment must have been really DONE. Punishment is always the great preserver of sin; treating it with respect, and honoring its enormity. For what you think is real you WANT, and will not let it go. An error, on the other hand, is not attractive. What you see clearly as a mistake you WANT corrected.

Sometimes a sin can be repeated over and over, with obviously distressing results, but without the loss of its appeal. And suddenly, you change its status from a sin to a mistake. Now you will not repeat it; you will merely stop and let it go, unless the guilt REMAINS. For then you will but change the FORM of sin, granting that it was an error, but keeping it uncorrectable. This is not really a change in your perception, for it is SIN that calls for punishment, not error. The Holy Spirit CANNOT punish sin. Mistakes He recognizes, and would correct them all as God entrusted Him to do. But sin He knows not, nor can He recognize mistakes which cannot be corrected. For a mistake which cannot be corrected is meaningless to Him.

Mistakes are FOR correction, and they call for nothing else. What calls for punishment must call for nothing. Every mistake MUST be a call for love. What, then, is sin? What could it be but a mistake you would

keep hidden; a call for help that you would keep unheard and thus unanswered? In time, the Holy Spirit clearly sees the Son of God can make mistakes. On this you share His vision. Yet you do not share His recognition of the difference between time and eternity. And when correction is completed, time IS eternity.

Time is like a downward spiral which seems to travel down from a long, unbroken line along another plane, but which in no way breaks the line, or interferes with its smooth continuousness. Along the spiral, it seems as if the line must have been broken. Yet at the line, its wholeness is apparent. Everything seen from the spiral is misperceived, but as you approach the line, you realize that it was not affected by the drop into another plane at all. Yet from the plane, the line seems discontinuous. And this is but an error in perception, which can be easily corrected in the MIND, although the body's eyes will see no change. The eyes see many things the mind corrects, and you respond, not to the eyes' illusions, but to the mind's CORRECTIONS.

You see the line as broken, and as you shift to different aspects of the spiral, the line looks different. Yet in your mind is One Who knows it is unbroken, and forever changeless. This One can teach you how to look on time differently and see BEYOND it, but not while you believe in sin. In error, yes, for this can be corrected by the mind. But sin is the belief that your perception is unchangeable, and that the mind must accept as true what it is told through it. If it does not obey, the mind is judged insane. The only power which could change perception is thus kept impotent, held to the body by the FEAR of changed perception which its Teacher, Who is one with it, would bring.

When you are tempted to believe that sin is real, remember this: If sin is real, both God and you are not. If creation is extension, the Creator must have extended Himself, and it is impossible that what is part of Him is totally unlike the rest. If sin is real, God must be at war with

Himself. He must be split, and torn between good and evil; partly sane and partially insane. For He must have created what wills to destroy Him, and has the POWER to do so. Is it not easier to believe that YOU have been mistaken than to believe in this?

While you believe that your reality or your brother's is bounded by a body, you will believe in sin. While you believe that bodies can unite, you will find guilt attractive, and believe that sin is precious. For the belief that bodies limit mind leads to a perception of the world in which the proof of separation seems to be everywhere. And God and His creation seem to be split apart and overthrown. For sin would PROVE what God created holy could not prevail against it, nor remain itself before the power of sin. Sin is perceived as MIGHTIER than God, before which God Himself must bow, and offer His creation to its conqueror. Is this humility or madness?

If sin were real, it would forever be beyond the hope of healing. For there would be a power beyond God's, capable of making another will which could attack His Will and OVERCOME It; and give His Son a will apart from His, and STRONGER. And each part of God's fragmented creation would have a different will, opposed to His, and in eternal opposition to Him and to each other. Your holy relationship has, as its purpose now, the goal of proving this is impossible. Heaven has smiled upon it, and the belief in sin has been uprooted in its smile of love. You see it still because you do not realize that its FOUNDATION has gone. Its source has been removed, and so it can be cherished but a little while before it vanishes. Only the habit of LOOKING for it still remains.

And yet you look with Heaven's smile upon your lips, and Heaven's blessing on your sight. You will not see it long. For in the new perception, the mind corrects it when it seems to be seen, and it becomes invisible. And errors are quickly recognized and quickly given to correction, to be healed, not hidden. You will be healed of sin and all its ravages the instant that you give it no power over each other. And you will help

each other overcome mistakes by joyously releasing one another from the belief in sin.

In the holy instant, you will see the smile of Heaven shining on BOTH of you. And you will shine upon each other, in glad acknowledgment of the grace that has been given you. For sin will not prevail against a union Heaven has smiled upon. Your perception was healed in the holy instant Heaven gave you. Forget what you have seen, and raise your eyes in faith to what you NOW can see. The barriers to Heaven will disappear before your holy sight, for you who were sightless have been given vision, and you can see. Look not for what has been removed, but for the glory that has been restored for you to see.

Look upon your Redeemer, and behold what He would show you in each other, and let not sin arise again to blind your eyes. For sin would keep you separate, but your Redeemer would have you look upon each other as yourself. Your relationship is now a temple of healing; a place where all the weary ones can come and find rest. Here is the rest that waits for all, after the journey. And it is brought nearer to all by your relationship.

As this peace extends from deep inside yourselves to embrace all the Sonship and give it rest, it will encounter many obstacles. Some of them you will try to impose. Others will seem to arise from elsewhere; from your brothers, and from various aspects of the world outside. Yet peace will gently cover them, extending past completely unhindered. The extension of the Holy Spirit's purpose from your relationship to others, to bring them gently in, will quietly extend to every aspect of your lives, surrounding both of you with glowing happiness and the calm awareness of complete protection. And you will carry its message of love and safety and freedom to everyone who draws nigh unto your temple, where healing waits for him.

You will not wait to give him this, for you will call to him and he will answer you, recognizing in your call the Call of God. And you will

draw him in and give him rest, as it was given you. All this will you do. Yet the peace which already lies deeply within must first expand, and flow across the obstacles you placed before it. This will you do, for nothing undertaken with the Holy Spirit remains unfinished. You can indeed be sure of nothing you see outside you, but of this you CAN be sure: The Holy Spirit asks that you offer Him a resting-place where you will rest in Him. He answered you, and entered your relationship. Would you not now return His graciousness, and enter into a relationship with Him? For it is He Who offered your relationship the gift of holiness, without which it would have been forever impossible to appreciate each other.

The gratitude you owe to Him He asks but that YOU receive for Him. And when you look with gentle graciousness upon each other, you ARE beholding Him. For you are looking where He IS, and not apart from Him. You cannot see the Holy Spirit, but you CAN see your brothers truly. And the light in them will show you all that you need to see. When the peace in you has been extended to encompass everyone, the Holy Spirit's function here will be accomplished. What need is there for seeing, then? When God has taken the last step Himself, the Holy Spirit will gather all your thanks and gratitude which you have offered Him, and lay them gently before His Creator in the name of His most holy Son. And the Father will accept them in His Name. What need is there of seeing, in the presence of His gratitude?

Obstacles to Peace

I. The Desire to Get Rid of It

The first obstacle that peace must flow across is your desire to get RID of it. For it cannot extend unless you KEEP it. You are the center from which it radiates outward, to call the others in. You are its home; its tranquil dwelling-place, from which it gently reaches out, but never leaving YOU. If you would make it homeless, how can it abide within the Son of God? If it would spread across the whole creation, it must begin with you, and FROM you reach to everyone who calls, and bring him rest by joining you.

Why would you want peace homeless? What do you think that it must disposses, to dwell with you? What seems to be the cost you are so unwilling to pay? The little barrier of sand still stands between you. Would you re-inforce it NOW? You are not asked to let it go for yourselves alone. Christ asks it of you for Himself. He would bring peace to everyone, and how can He do this EXCEPT through you? Would you let a little bank of sand, a wall of dust, a tiny seeming barrier, stand between your brothers and salvation? And yet, it IS this little remnant of attack you cherish still against each other that is the first obstacle the peace in you encounters in its going forth. This little wall of hatred would still oppose the Will of God, and keep It limited.

The Holy Spirit's purpose rests in peace within you. Yet you are still unwilling to let it join you wholly. You still oppose the Will of God, just by a little. And that little is a limit you would place upon the whole. God's Will is One, not many. It has no opposition, for there is none beside It. What you would still contain behind your little barrier and keep separate from each other seems mightier than the universe, for it would hold back the universe and its Creator. This little wall would hide the purpose of Heaven, and keep it FROM Heaven.

Would you thrust salvation away from the GIVER of salvation? For such have you become. Peace could no more depart from you than from God.

Fear not this little obstacle. It cannot contain the Will of God. Peace WILL flow across it, and join you without hindrance. Salvation cannot BE withheld from you. It is your PURPOSE. You CANNOT will apart from this. You have no purpose apart from each other, nor apart from the one you asked the Holy Spirit to share with you. The little wall will fall away so quietly beneath the wings of peace! For peace will send its messengers from you to all the world. And barriers will fall away before their coming as easily as those which you would interpose will be surmounted.

To overcome the world is no more difficult than to surmount your little wall. For in the miracle of your relationship, without this barrier, is EVERY miracle contained. There is no order of difficulty in miracles, for they are all the SAME. Each is a gentle winning over from the appeal of guilt to the appeal of love. How can this FAIL to be accomplished, wherever it is undertaken? Guilt can raise no real barriers against it. And all that seems to stand between you must fall away because of the appeal you answered. For from you who answered, He Who answered you would call. His home is in your holy relationship. Do not attempt to stand between Him and His holy purpose, for it is yours. But let Him quietly extend the miracle of your relationship to everyone contained in it as it was given.

There is a hush in Heaven, a happy expectancy, a little pause of gladness in acknowledgment of the journey's end. For Heaven knows you well, as you know Heaven. No illusions stand between you now. Look not upon the little wall of shadows. The sun has risen OVER it. How can a shadow keep you from the sun? No more can you be kept by shadows from the light in which illusions end. Every miracle is but the end of an illusion. Such was the journey; such its ending. And in the goal of truth which you accepted must ALL illusions end.

The little, insane wish to get rid of Him Whom you invited in and push Him out MUST produce conflict. As you look upon the world, this little

wish, uprooted and floating aimlessly, can land and settle briefly upon anything, for it HAS no purpose now. Before the Holy Spirit entered to abide with you, it seemed to have a MIGHTY purpose; the fixed and unchangeable dedication to sin and its results. Now it is aimless, wandering pointlessly, causing no more than tiny interruptions in love's appeal.

This feather of a wish, this tiny illusion, this microscopic remnant of the belief in sin, is all that remains of what once seemed to be the world. It is no longer an unrelenting barrier to peace. Its pointless wandering makes its results appear to be more erratic and unpredictable than before. Yet what COULD be more unstable than a tightly-organized delusional system? Its seeming stability is its pervasive WEAKNESS, which extends to everything. The variability which the little remnant induces merely indicates its limited results.

How mighty can a little feather be before the great wings of truth? Can it oppose an eagle's flight, or hinder the advance of summer? Can it interfere with the effects of summer's sun upon a garden covered by the snow? See but how easily this little whisp is lifted up and carried away, never to return, and part with it in gladness, not regret. For it is nothing in itself, and stood for nothing when you had greater faith in its protection. Would you not rather greet the summer sun than fix your gaze upon a disappearing snowflake, and shiver in remembrance of the winter's cold?



### The Attraction of Guilt

The attraction of guilt produces fear of love, for love would never look on guilt at all. It is the nature of love to look upon only the truth, for there it sees itself, with which it would unite in holy union and completion. As love must look past fear, so must fear see love not. For love contains the end of guilt, as surely as fear depends on it. Overlooking guilt completely, it sees no fear. Being wholly without attack, it COULD not be afraid. Fear is attracted to what love sees not, and each believes that what the other looks upon does not exist. Fear looks on guilt with just the same devotion that love looks on itself. And each has messengers which they send forth, and which return to them with messages written in the language in which their going forth was asked.

Love's messengers are gently sent, and return with messages of love and gentleness. The messengers of fear are harshly ordered to seek out guilt, and cherish every scrap of evil and of sin which they can find, losing none of them on pain of death, and laying them respectfully before their lord and master. Perception cannot obey two masters, each asking for messages of different things in different languages. What fear would feed upon, love overlooks. What fear demands, love cannot even see.

The fierce attraction which guilt holds for fear is wholly absent from love's gentle perception. What love would look upon is meaningless to fear, and quite invisible. Relationships in this world are the result of how the world is seen. And this depends on which emotion was called on to send its messengers to look upon it, and return with word of what they saw. Fear's messengers are trained through terror, and they tremble when their master calls upon them to serve him. For fear is merciless even to its friends. Its messengers steal guiltily away in hungry search of guilt, for they are kept cold and starving, and made very vicious by their master, who allows them to feast only upon what they return to him. No little shred of guilt escapes their hungry eyes. And in their savage search for sin, they

pounce on any living thing they see, and carry it screaming to their master, to be devoured.

Send not these savage messengers into the world, to feast upon it, and to prey upon reality. For they will bring you word of bones and skin and flesh. They have been taught to seek for the corruptible, and to return with gorges filled with things decayed and rotted. To them such things are beautiful because they seem to allay their savage pangs of hunger. For they are frantic with the pain of fear, and would avert the punishment of him who sends them forth by offering him what they hold dear.

The Holy Spirit has given you love's messengers to send instead of those you trained through fear. They are as eager to return to you what they hold dear as are the others. If you send them forth, they will see only the blameless and the beautiful, the gentle and the kind. They will be as careful to let no little act of charity, no tiny expression of forgiveness, no little breathe of love escape their notice. And they will return with all the happy things they found, to share them lovingly with you. Be not afraid of THEM. They offer you salvation. Theirs are the messages of safety, for they see the world as kind.

If you send forth only the messengers the Holy Spirit gives you, WANTING no messages but theirs, you will see fear no more. The world will be transformed before your sight, cleansed of all guilt and softly brushed with beauty. The world contains no fear which you laid not upon it. And none you cannot ask love's messengers to remove from it, and see it still. The Holy Spirit has given you His messengers to send to each other, and return to each with what love sees. They have been given to replace the hungry dogs of fear you sent instead. And they go forth to signify the END of fear.

Love, too, would set a feast before you, on a table covered with a spotless cloth, set in a quiet garden where no sound but singing and a softly joyous whispering is ever heard. This is a feast which honors your

holy relationship, and at which everyone is welcomed as an honored guest. And in a holy instant grace is said by everyone together, as they join in gentleness before the table of communion. And I will join you there, as long ago I promised and promise still. For in your new relationship am I made welcome. And where I am made welcome, there I AM.

I am made welcome in the state of grace, which means you have at last forgiven me. For I became the symbol of your sin, and so I had to die instead of you. To the ego sin MEANS death, and so Atonement is achieved through murder. Salvation is looked upon as a way by which the Son of God was killed instead of YOU.

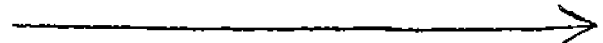
Yet would I offer you my body, you whom I love, KNOWING its littleness? Or would I teach that bodies cannot keep us apart? Mine was of no greater value than yours; no better means for communication of salvation, but NOT its Source. No-one can die for anyone, and death does not atone for sin. Yet you can LIVE to show it is not real. The body DOES appear to be the symbol of sin, while you believe that it can get you what you want. While you believe that it can give you pleasure, you will also believe that it can bring you pain.

To think you could be satisfied and happy with so little is to hurt yourself, and to limit the happiness that you would have, calls upon pain to fill your meager store and make your lives complete. This IS completion, as the ego sees it. For guilt creeps in where happiness has been removed, and substitutes for it. Communion is another kind of completion, which goes beyond guilt, because it goes beyond the body.

### Obstacles to Peace

#### II. The Belief the Body is Valuable for What it Offers

We said that peace must first surmount the obstacle of your desire to get rid of it. Where the attraction of guilt holds sway, peace is not WANTED. The second obstacle that peace must flow across, and closely related to the first, is the belief that the body is valuable for what it offers. For here is the attraction of guilt made manifest in the body, and SEEN in it.

This the value that you think 

peace would rob you of. This is what you believe that it would dispossess, and leave you homeless. And it is this for which you would deny a home to peace. This "sacrifice" you feel to be too great to make, too much to ask of you.

Is it a sacrifice, or a release? What has the body really given you that justifies your strange belief that in it lies salvation? Do you not see that this is the belief in death? Here is the focus of the perception of Atonement as murder. Here is the source of the idea that love is fear. The Holy Spirit's messengers are sent far beyond the body, calling the mind to join in holy communion and be at peace. Such is the message that I gave them for you.

It is only the messengers of fear that see the body, for they look for what can suffer. Is it a sacrifice to be REMOVED from what can suffer? The Holy Spirit does not demand you sacrifice the hope of the body's pleasure; it HAS no hope of pleasure. But neither can it bring you fear of pain. Pain is the only "sacrifice" the Holy Spirit asks, and this He WOULD remove.

Peace is extended from you only to the eternal, and it reaches out from the eternal in YOU. It flows across all else. The second obstacle is no more solid than the first. For you will neither to get rid of peace NOR limit it. What are these obstacles which you would interpose between peace and its going forth but barriers you place between your will and its accomplishment? You WANT communion, not the feast of fear. You WANT salvation, not the pain of guilt. And you want your Father, NOT a little mound of clay, to be your home. In your holy relationship is your Father's Son. He has not lost communion with Him, nor with himself. When you agreed to join each other, you acknowledged this is so. This has no cost, but it has RELEASE from cost.

You have paid very dearly for your illusions, and nothing you have

paid for brought you peace. Are you not GLAD that Heaven cannot be sacrificed, and sacrifice cannot be asked of you? There IS no obstacle which you can place before our union, for in your holy relationship I am there already. We will surmount all obstacles together, for we stand within the gates, and not outside. How easily the gates are opened from within, to let peace through to bless the tired world! Can it be difficult for us to walk past barriers together, when you have joined the limitless? The end of guilt is in your hands to give. Would you stop now to look for guilt in each other?

Let me be to you the symbol of the END of guilt, and look upon each other as you would look on me. Forgive me all the sins you think the Son of God committed. And in the light of your forgiveness, he will remember who he is, and forget what never was. I ask for your forgiveness, for if you are guilty, so must I be. But if I surmounted guilt and overcame the world, YOU were with me. Would you see in me the symbol of guilt, or of the END of guilt, remembering that what I signify to you you see within YOURSELF?

From your holy relationship truth proclaims the truth, and love looks on itself. Salvation flows from deep within the home you offered to my Father and to me. And we are there together, in the quiet communion in which the Father and the Son are joined. Oh come ye faithful to the holy union of the Father and the Son in you! And keep you not apart from what is offered you, in gratitude for giving peace its home in Heaven. Send forth to all the world the joyous message of the end of guilt, and all the world will answer. Think of your happiness as everyone offers you witness of the end of sin, and shows you that its power is gone forever. Where can guilt be, when the belief in sin is gone? And where is death, when its great advocate is heard no more?

Forgive me your illusions, and release me from punishment for what I have not done. So will you learn the freedom that I taught by teaching

freedom to each other, and so releasing me. I am within your holy relationship, yet you would imprison me behind the obstacles you raise to freedom, and bar my way to you. Yet it is not possible to keep away One Who is there already. And in Him it IS possible that our communion, where we are joined already, will be the focus of the new perception that will bring light to all the world, contained in YOU.

Pleasure and Pain

Your little part is but to give the Holy Spirit the whole IDEA of sacrifice. And to accept the peace He gave instead, without the limits which would hold its extension back, and so would limit YOUR awareness of it. For what He gives must be extended, if you would have its limitless power, and use it for the Son of God's release. It is not this you would be rid of, and having it you CANNOT limit it. If peace is homeless, so are you and so am I. And He Who is our home is homeless WITH us. Is this your will? Would you forever be a wanderer in search of peace? Would you invest your hope of peace and happiness in what MUST fail?

Faith in the eternal is always justified, for the eternal is forever kind, infinite in its patience, and wholly loving. It will accept you wholly, and give you peace. Yet it can unite only with what ALREADY is at peace in you, immortal as itself. The body can bring you neither peace nor turmoil; neither pain nor joy. It is a means, and not an end. It has NO purpose of itself, but only what is given to it. The body will seem to be whatever is the means for reaching the goal that you assign to it. Peace and guilt are both conditions of the mind, to be attained. And these conditions are the home of the emotion which called them forth, and therefore is compatible with them. But think you which it is that is compatible with YOU.

Here is your choice, and it IS free. But all that lies in it WILL come with it, and what you think you are can never be apart from it. The body is the great seeming betrayer of faith. In it lies disillusionment and the seeds of faithlessness, but only if you ask of it what it cannot give. Can your mistake be reasonable grounds for depression and disillusionment, and for retaliative attack on what you think has failed you? Use not your error as the justification for your faithlessness. You have not sinned, but you have been mistaken in what is faithful. And the correction of your mistake will GIVE you grounds for faith.

It is impossible to seek for pleasure through the body and NOT find pain. It is essential that this relationship be understood, for it is one the ego sees as PROOF of sin. It is not really punitive at all. It is but the inevitable result of equating yourself with the body, which is the INVITATION to pain. For it invites fear to enter, and become your purpose. The attraction of guilt MUST enter with it, and whatever fear directs the body to do is therefore painful. It will share the pain of ALL illusions, and the illusion of pleasure will be the SAME as pain.

Is not this inevitable? Under fear's orders, the body will pursue guilt, serving its master whose attraction to guilt maintains the whole illusion of its existence. This, then, IS the attraction of pain. Ruled by this perceptinn, the body becomes the servant of pain, seeking it dutifully, and obeying the idea that pain is pleasure. It is this idea that underlies all of the ego's heavy investment in the body. And it is this insane relationship which it keeps hidden, and yet feeds upon. To YOU it teaches that the body's pleasure is happiness. Yet to ITSELF it whispers, "It is death."

Why should the body be anything to you? Certainly what it is made of is not precious. And just as certainly, it has no feeling. It transmits to you the feelings that you WANT. Like any communication medium, the body receives and sends the messages that it is given. It has no feeling for them. All of the feeling with which they are invested is given by the sender and the receiver. The ego and the Holy Spirit both recognize this, and both also recognize that here the sender and receiver are the SAME. The Holy Spirit tells you this with joy. The ego hides it, for it would keep you unaware of it. Who would send messages of hatred and attack if he but understood he sends them to HIMSELF? Who would accuse, make guilty and condemn HIMSELF?

The ego's messages are always sent AWAY from you, in the belief that for your message of attack and guilt will someone other than yourself



suffer. And even if you suffer, yet someone else will suffer more. The great deceiver recognizes that this is not so, but as the "enemy" of peace, it urges you to send out all your messages of hate and free YOURSELF. And to convince you this is possible, it bids the body search for pain in attack upon another, calling it pleasure and offering it to you as freedom FROM attack.

Hear not its madness, and believe not the impossible is true. Forget not that the ego has dedicated the body to the goal of sin, and places in it all its faith that this can be accomplished. Its sad disciples chant the body's praise continually, in solemn celebration of the ego's rule. Not one but must believe that yielding to the attraction of guilt is the ESCAPE from pain. Not one but must regard the body as himself, without which he would die, and yet within which is his death equally inevitable.

It is not given to the ego's disciples to realize that they have dedicated THEMSELVES to death. Freedom is offered them, but they have not accepted it, and what is offered must also be received, to be truly given. For the Holy Spirit, too, is a communication medium, receiving from the Father and offering His messages unto the Son. Like the ego, the Holy Spirit is both the sender and the receiver. For what is sent through Him RETURNS to Him, seeking itself along the way, and finding what it seeks. So does the ego find the death IT seeks, returning it to YOU.

### Obstacles to Peace

#### III. The Attraction of Death

To you, in whose special relationship the Holy Spirit entered, it is given to release and be released from the dedication to death. For it was offered you, and you ACCEPTED. Yet you must learn still more about this strange devotion, for it contains the third of the obstacles which peace must flow across. No-one can die unless he chooses death. What SEEMS to be the fear of death is really its ATTRACTION. Guilt, too, is feared and fearful. Yet it could have no hold at all except on those who are attracted to it and seek it out. And so it is with death. Made by the ego, its dark shadow falls across all living things, because the ego is the "enemy" of life.

And yet a shadow cannot kill. What is a shadow to the living? They but walk past and it is gone. But what of those whose dedication it is NOT to live; the black-draped "sinners," the ego's mournful chorus, plodding so heavily away from life, dragging their chains and marching in the slow procession which honors their grim master, lord of death? Touch any one of them with the gentle hands of forgiveness, and watch the chains fall away, along with yours. See him throw aside the black robe he was wearing to his funeral, and hear him laugh at death. The sentence sin would lay upon him he can escape through your forgiveness.

This is no arrogance. It is the Will of God. What is impossible to you who chose His Will as yours? What is death to you? YOUR dedication is not to death, nor to its master. When you accepted the Holy Spirit's purpose in place of the ego's, you renounced death, exchanging it for life. We know that an idea leaves not its source. And death is the result of the thought we call the ego, as surely as life is the result of the Thought of God.

The Incorruptible Body

From the ego came sin and guilt and death, in opposition to life and innocence, and to the Will of God Himself. Where can such opposition lie but in the sick minds of the insane, dedicated to madness and set against the peace of Heaven. One thing is sure; God, Who created neither sin nor death, will not that you be bound by them. He knows of neither sin nor its results. The shrouded figures in the funeral procession march not in honor of their Creator, Whose Will it is they live. They are not following It; they are OPPOSING It.

And what is the black-draped body they would bury? A body which THEY dedicated to death, a symbol of corruption; a sacrifice to sin, offered to sin to feed upon and keep itself alive; a thing condemned, damned by its maker, and lamented by every mourner who looks upon it as himself. You who believe you have condemned the Son of God to this ARE arrogant. But you who would release him are but honoring the Will of his Creator. The arrogance of sin, the pride of guilt, the sepulchre of separation, all are part of your unrecognized dedication to death. The glitter of guilt you laid upon the body would kill it. For what the ego loves it kills for its obedience. But what obeys it not it CANNOT kill.

You have another dedication which would keep the body incorruptible and perfect as long as it is useful for your holy purpose. The body no more dies than it can feel. It does NOTHING. Of itself, it is neither corruptible nor incorruptible. It IS nothing. It is the result of a tiny, mad idea of corruption which can be CORRECTED. For God has answered this insane idea with His Own, an answer which left Him not, and therefore brings the Creator to the awareness of every mind which heard His answer and ACCEPTED it.

You who are dedicated to the incorruptible have been given, through your acceptance, the power to RELEASE from corruption. What better way to teach the first and fundamental principle in a course on miracles than by showing you the one which seems to be the hardest can be accomplished first? The body can but serve your purpose. As you look upon it, so will it

seem to be. Death, were it true, would be the final and complete disruption of communication which is the ego's goal.

Those who fear death see not how often and how loudly they call to it, and bid it come to save them from communication. For death is seen as safety, the great dark saviour from the light of truth, the answer to the Answer, the silencer of the Voice that speaks for God. Yet the retreat to death is not the end of conflict. Only GOD'S answer is its end. The obstacle of your seeming love for death that peace must flow across seems to be very great. For in it lies hidden all the ego's secrets, all its strange devices for deception, all its sick ideas and wierd imaginings. Here is the final end of union, the triumph of the ego's making over creation, the victory of lifelessness on Life Itself.

Under the dusty edge of its distorted world the ego would lay the Son of God, slain by its orders, proof in his decay that God Himself is powerless before the ego's might, unable to protect the life that He created against the ego's savage wish to kill. My brothers, Children of our Father, this is a DREAM of death. There is no funeral, no dark altars, no grim commandments nor twisted rituals of condemnation to which the body leads you. Ask not release of IT. But free it from the merciless and unrelenting orders YOU laid upon it, and forgive it what YOU ordered it to do. In its exaltation you commanded it to die, for only death COULD conquer life. And what but insanity could look upon the defeat of God, and think it real?

The fear of death will go as its appeal is yielded to love's REAL attraction. The end of sin, which nestles quietly in the safety of your relationship, protected by your union, ready to grow into a mighty force for God, is very near. The infancy of salvation is carefully guarded by love, preserved from every thought that would attack it, and quietly made ready to fulfill the mighty task for which it was given you. Your newborn purpose is nursed by angels, cherished by the Holy Spirit, and protected by

God Himself. It needs not your protection; IT is YOURS. For it is deathless, and within it lies the end of death.

What danger can assail the wholly innocent? What can attack the guiltless? What fear can enter and disturb the peace of sinlessness? What has been given you, even in its infancy, is in full communication with God and you. In its tiny hands it holds, in perfect safety, every miracle you will perform, held out to you. The miracle of life is ageless, born in time but nourished in eternity. Behold this infant, to whom you gave a resting-place by your forgiveness of each other, and see in it the Will of God. Here is the babe of Bethlehem reborn. And everyone who gives him shelter will follow him, not to the cross, but to the Resurrection and the Life.

When anything seems to you to be a source of fear, when any situation strikes you with terror and makes your body tremble and the cold sweat of fear comes over it, remember it is always for ONE reason; the ego has perceived it as a symbol of fear, a sign of sin and death. Remember, then, that neither sign nor symbol should be confused with source, for they must stand for something OTHER than themselves. Their meaning cannot lie in them, but must be sought in what they REPRESENT. And they may thus mean everything or nothing, according to the truth or falsity of the idea which they reflect. Confronted with such seeming uncertainty of meaning, judge it not. Remember the holy presence of the One given to you to be the Source of judgment. Give it to Him to judge for you, and say:

"Take this from me and look upon it, judging it for me.  
Let me not see it as a sign of sin and death, nor use it for  
destruction.  
Teach me how NOT to make of it an obstacle to peace,  
But let You use it FOR me, to facilitate its coming."

IV: The Fear of God

What would you see without the fear of death? What would you feel and think if death held no attraction for you? Very simply, you would remember your Father. The Creator of life, the Source of everything that lives, the Father of the universe and of the universe of universes, and of everything that lies even beyond them would you remember. And as this memory rises in your mind, peace must still surmount a final obstacle, after which is salvation completed, and the Son of God entirely restored to sanity. For here your world DOES end.

The fourth obstacle to be surmounted hangs like a heavy veil before the face of Christ. Yet as His face rises beyond it, shining with joy because He is in His Father's Love, peace will lightly brush the veil aside and run to meet Him, and to join with Him at last. For this dark veil, which seems to make the face of Christ Himself like to a leper's, and the bright rays of His Father's Love which light His face with glory appear as streams of blood, fades in the blazing light beyond it when the fear of death is gone.

This is the darkest veil, upheld by the belief in death, and protected by its attraction. The dedication to death and to its sovereignty is but the solemn vow, the promise made in secret to the ego never to lift this veil, not to approach it, nor even to suspect that it is there. This is the secret bargain made with the ego to keep what lies beyond the veil forever blotted out and unremembered. Here is your promise never to allow union to call you out of separation; the great amnesia in which the memory of God seems quite forgotten; the cleavage of your Self from you; - THE FEAR OF GOD, the final step in your dissociation.

See how the belief in death would seem to "save" you. For if this is gone, what can you fear but LIFE? It is the attraction of death that makes life seem to be ugly, cruel and tyrannical. You are no more afraid of death than of the ego. These are your chosen FRIENDS. For in your secret alliance with them, you have agreed never to let the fear of God be lifted, so you

could look upon the face of Christ, and join Him in His Father.

Every obstacle that peace must flow across is surmounted in just the same way; the fear that raised it yields to the love beneath, and so the fear is gone. And so it is with this. The desire to get rid of peace and drive the Holy Spirit from you fades in the presence of the quiet recognition that you love Him. The exaltation of the body is given up in favor of the Spirit, which you love as you could NEVER love the body. And the appeal of death is lost forever as love's attraction stirs and calls to you. From beyond each of the obstacles to love, Love Itself has called, and each has been surmounted by the power of the attraction of what lies beyond. Your WANTING fear seemed to be holding them in place. Yet when you heard the voice of love beyond them, you answered and they disappeared.

And now you stand in terror before what you swore never to look upon. Your eyes look down, remembering your promise to your "friends." The "loveliness" of sin, the delicate appeal of guilt, the "holy" waxen image of death, and the fear of vengeance of the ego you swore in blood not to desert, all rise and bid you not to raise your eyes. For you realize that if you look on this and LET the veil be lifted, THEY will be gone forever. All of your "friends," your "protectors" and your "home" will vanish. Nothing that you remember now will you remember.

It seems to you the world will utterly abandon you if you but raise your eyes. Yet all that will occur is you will leave the world forever. This is the re-establishment of YOUR will. Look upon it, open-eyed, and you will nevermore believe that you are at the mercy of things beyond you, forces you cannot control, and thoughts that come to you against your will. It IS your will to look on this. No mad desire, no trivial impulse to forget again, no stab of fear nor the cold sweat of seeming death can stand against your will. For what attracts you from beyond the veil is also deep WITHIN you, un-separated from it and completely One.

The Lifting of the Veil

Forget not that you came this far TOGETHER. And it was surely not the ego that led you here. No obstacle to peace can be surmounted through ITS help. IT does not open up its secrets, and bid you look on them and go beyond them. IT would not have you see its weakness, and learn it has no power to keep you from the truth. The Guide Who brought you here REMAINS with you, and when you raise your eyes, you will be READY to look on terror with no fear at all. But first, lift up your eyes and look upon each other in innocence born of complete forgiveness of each other's illusions, and through the eyes of faith, which sees them not.

No-one can look upon the fear of God unterrified unless he has accepted the Atonement, and learned illusions are not real. No-one can stand before this obstacle alone, for he could not have reached thus far UNLESS his brother walked beside him. And no-one would dare to look on it without complete forgiveness of his brother in his heart. Stand you here a while, and tremble not. You will be ready. Let us join together in a holy instant, here in this place where the purpose GIVEN in a holy instant has led you. And let us join in faith that He Who brought us here together will offer you the innocence you need, and that you will accept it for my love and His.

Nor is it possible to look on this too soon. This is the place to which everyone must come when he is ready. Once he has found his brother he IS ready. Yet merely to reach the place is not enough. A journey without a purpose is still meaningless, and even when it is over it seems to make no sense. How can you KNOW that it is over unless you realize its purpose IS accomplished? Here, with the journey's end before you, you SEE its purpose. And it is here you choose whether to look upon it or wander on, only to return and make the choice again.

To look upon the fear of God DOES need some preparation. Only the same can look on stark insanity and raving madness with pity and compassion, but not with fear. For only if they share in it does it seem fearful, and you DO share in it until you look upon each other with perfect faith and love



and tenderness. Before complete forgiveness you still stand unforgiving. You are afraid of God BECAUSE you fear each other. Those you do not forgive YOU FEAR. And no-one reaches love with fear beside him.

This brother who stands beside you still seems to be a stranger. You do not know him, and your interpretation of him is very fearful. And you attack him still, to keep what seems to be YOURSELF unharmed. Yet in his hands is your salvation. You see his madness, which you hate because you SHARE it. And all the pity and forgiveness that would heal it gives way to fear. Brothers, you NEED forgiveness of each other, for you will share in madness or in Heaven together. And you will raise your eyes in faith together, or not at all.

Beside each of you is one who offers you the chalice of Atonement, for the Holy Spirit is in him. Would you hold his sins against him, or accept his gift to you? Is this giver of salvation your friend or enemy? Choose which he is, remembering that you will receive of him according to your choice. He has in him the power to forgive your sins, as you for him. Neither can give it to himself alone. And yet your Saviour stands beside each one. Let him be what he is, and seek not to make of love an enemy.

Behold your Friend, the Christ Who stands beside you. How holy and how beautiful He is! You thought He sinned because you cast the veil of sin upon Him to hide His loveliness. Yet still He holds forgiveness out to you, to share His holiness. This "enemy," this "stranger" still offers you salvation as His Friend. The "enemies" of Christ, the worshippers of sin, know not Whom they attack. This is your brother, crucified by sin, and waiting for release from pain. Would you not offer him forgiveness, when only he can offer it to YOU? For his redemption he will give you yours as surely as God created every living thing and loves it. And he will give it truly, for it will be both offered and received.

There is no grace of Heaven that you cannot offer to each other, and receive from your most holy Friend. Let him withhold it not, for by

receiving it you offer it to him. Redemption has been given you to give each other, and thus receive it. Whom you forgive is free, and what you give you share. Forgive the sins your brother thinks he has committed, and all the guilt you think you see in him.

Here is the holy place of resurrection, to which we come again; to which we will return until redemption is accomplished and RECEIVED. Think who your brother is, before you would condemn him. And offer thanks to God that he is holy, and has been given the gift of holiness for YOU. Join him in gladness, and remove all trace of guilt from his disturbed and tortured mind. Help him to lift the heavy burden of sin you laid upon him and he accepted as his own, and toss it lightly and with happy laughter away from him. Press it not like thorns against his brow, nor nail him to it unredeemed and hopeless.

Give each other faith, for faith and hope and mercy are yours to give. Into the hands that give the gift is given. Look on your brother, and see in him the gift of God you would receive. It is almost Easter, the time of resurrection. Let us give redemption to each other and SHARE in it, that we may rise as one in resurrection, and not separate in death. Behold the gift of freedom that I gave the Holy Spirit for BOTH of you. And be you free together, as you offer to the Holy Spirit this same gift. And giving it receive it of Him in return for what you gave. He leadeth you and me together, that we might meet here in this holy place, and make the same decisio

Free your brother here, as I freed you. Give him the self-same gift, nor look upon him with condemnation of any kind. See him as guiltless as I look on you, and overlook the sins he thinks he sees within himself. Offer each other freedom and complete release from sin, here in the garden of seeming agony and death. So will we prepare together the way unto the resurrection of God's Son, and let him rise again to glad remembrance of his Father, Who knows no sin, no death, but only life eternal.

Together we will disappear into the Presence beyond the veil, not to be lost but FOUND; not to be seen but KNOWN. And knowing, nothing in the plan God has established for salvation will be left undone. This is the journey's purpose, without which IS the journey meaningless. Here is the peace of God, given to you eternally by Him. Here is the rest and quiet that you seek, the reason for the journey from its beginning. Heaven is the gift you owe each other, the debt of gratitude you offer to the Son of God in thanks for what he is, and what his Father created him to be.

Think carefully how you would look upon the giver of this gift, for as you look on him, so will the gift itself appear to be. As he is seen as either the giver of guilt or of salvation, so will his offering be seen, and so received. The crucified give pain because they are in pain. But the redeemed give joy because they have been HEALED of pain. Everyone gives as he receives, but he must choose what it will BE that he receives. And he will recognize his choice by what he gives, and what is given him. Nor is it given anything in hell or Heaven to interfere with his decision.

You came this far because the journey WAS your choice. And no-one undertakes to do what he believes is meaningless. What you had faith in still is faithful, and watches over you in faith so gentle yet so strong that it would lift you far BEYOND the veil, and place the Son of God safely within the sure protection of his Father. Here is the only purpose that gives this world and the long journey through this world whatever meaning lies in them. Beyond this, they ARE meaningless. You stand together, still without conviction they HAVE a purpose. Yet it is given you to see this purpose in your holy Friend, and recognize it as your own.