

The Path - IV

T098 The Inner Teachings 14th June 1939 Pembroke Hall, London

Invocation:

Almighty and eternal Spirit of wisdom, love and power, we pray to Thee, we aspire to Thee, that we may be strengthened and helped on the path which leadeth to Thee. May the blessing of the holy angels be upon this gathering, and may each heart be touched by the love of Christ.

Amen.

These words are so simple: 'May each heart be touched by the love of Christ'. Many times we have all heard similar words and yet we forget them in the heat and the stress of the outer life, and especially when we are troubled with anxieties and fears and irritation. Yet could we bring our minds back to this simple truth we should find all angers consumed, all fears dispelled, all weariness pass from us, with the very thought, or the realisation within our breast, that Christ's love is touching our hearts. Such love puts everything right; nothing seems to matter with that touch, for we have experienced for ourselves the healing and the comforting power of love and know then the power of love to help another soul.

Before we speak to you about the heart of love, we would say again that the experience which we have previously likened to a crucifixion, or to the vision of the Christ light in the heavens, is an important step on this path of spiritual growth. The lower self shrinks from this sacrifice, which is why so many men and women prefer to keep themselves wrapped up in a cloak of materialism; why they will not admit the possibility of a life after death. They intuitively know that as soon as they admit the life of the spirit—which is the eternal life—then they must alter all their values, their moral standard, their attitude of mind towards life. The materialist is living—or thinks he is—for physical life only, and accumulates possessions, either mental (wherein, by the way, lies a subtle temptation) or material. These things are superficial and, except for the karma they make, which will overtake the man* in due course, actual material possessions are transient, they pass away and are of no real value to the real man.

*[*For editorial policy around gender, see the introduction.]*

This we give as the reason why, sometimes, man refuses to listen to any kind of spiritual teaching, but we must also remember that another reason may make him reject the spiritual path. There are two types of materialists: those unawakened to the inner light and those who know in their deep consciousness, but who feel the urge to pursue a path on the outer plane with a purpose—a purpose which is leading them to contribute valuable services to the outer world. We lay these two aspects before you so that you will see how impossible it is to judge, from the outer aspect of man, what is the motive, what lies behind their actions.

This cross of sacrifice or renunciation of desire of body and mind and, I am going to add, of the spirit, we all in due time gladly welcome. I add the phrase 'of the spirit' because on this path there are so many snares that it becomes like walking on a razor edge, its temptations are so subtle. Only by keeping the purpose pure and the Christ light burning steadily can we hold fast to the path. Temptations which arise from the lower self crop up all the way. We are told that even at the top of the ladder we may make a false step and come down, and then have to

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retrace our steps. Do not let this discourage you; bear in mind the reality of the inner light, and however much you are tempted by your own weakness and failure, keep on, keep on, keep on keeping on. Press forward. Do not give up the endeavour, for that is weak and futile and will not help you, because you cannot return to the place of blindness on the material plane; your eyes having once been opened there is only one way for you and that is forward. But beware of the temptation of selfish ambition, the desire to advance rapidly on the spiritual path (which you may think selfless but is actually selfish) urging you onward and upward only because of the glories which you will attain. This will not do.

The law of the universe is 'give and take'. You have heard of this before applied to everyday material life, but 'as above, so below', and [thus] throughout the universe is this law of give and take. As you learn this in everyday relationships with your brother man remember that same cosmic law, the universal law, is being applied to you in your spiritual life. Certain planetary influences demand renunciation: they give with one hand and they take with the other. Such influences take from you and you have no choice in the matter. Remember this: that in so far as these influences rob you on the outer plane of possessions and conditions which you like and which you feel are good for you, when these are swept away remember always, we beg you, that God never takes without giving, and what is taken with one hand is given in a different way with the other. This is God's bounty, His mercy and His love.

So the candidate who treads the path leading to the portals of initiation must be prepared to welcome the cross of renunciation, or crucifixion. The soul growing strong, the soul in whom that flame begins to burn brightly, will face all renunciation philosophically, tranquilly, joyously. For that wise soul will know that which is lost has served its purpose, its usefulness, and something better now awaits that soul, whether on the spiritual or the material plane it does not know, but certainly something better awaits it. We must learn to face the cross with tranquillity, knowing that out of the ashes of the past is born new life. Every one of you knows this to be true—you have experienced it—pain and suffering so often comes because a soul will cling to a condition which obviously must be withdrawn, but having learnt this lesson, having been willing to renounce, we receive fresh opportunities and greater blessing. We might even say that the master's hand is laid upon the head of the pupil with 'Well done, little brother'.

We look forward then to the next step, which is to learn the great lesson of love. We see our next step symbolised by the flaming heart of love. On this path of love there are still many snares and delusions. We start off with a great desire to give love, to love all, and perhaps with a sneaking desire to be also loved—so natural and human. Dear ones, if you learn this lesson of love yourself there will be no question of being loved, because the growth of that flaming heart in your own breast will give you all the love that you can possibly receive. You don't need to want to be loved; all you need is to love, and as soon as this is realised by the pupil peace comes.

Let us analyse love if we can. We so frequently confuse sentiment with love; this is rather a difficulty because sentiment has its place and it is not easy to separate it from love, but like all virtues when carried to excess, love loses all its power, its goodness and becomes a

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hindrance, causing man to side-track, to cover up his own weaknesses and faults in the name of love, to become blind to the real need of his brother. Perhaps this is one of the most important things: misplaced love—or sentiment—can blind a man to his real service to his brother; it will cause him to give, to indulge, not only to indulge himself indirectly but his brother also. We use the illustration of the devoted mother who gives the child everything it demands, thinking this to be love; the mother bestows not only material things but, blinding herself to the child's need for self-development, gives it all things mental and spiritual. What is the result? Instead of giving her child opportunities to be happy, opportunities to grow, the mother is robbing it of every chance of self-expression and development. The wise mother withholds lavish expenditure. I repeat (and remember that you are all mothers, men, women and children)—a wise mother withholds lavish expenditure. Does this mean that the mother should become cold and indifferent? No. It means that that mother has such love that she sees clearly the child's need for experience, that it must learn to make its own decisions.

The greatest gift that you can give is to help your brother, or your child, to make its own decisions and to gain its own experience. Yes, even if the parent sees that the child may be deprived of the things that are sweet—shall we say a box of sweets? You can interpret that in many ways. Sweets can cause suffering by giving a bad bilious attack. So also with the adult: if you indulge your brother and give him all that he wants thinking this is love, you are likely to give the equivalent of a bilious attack—an uncomfortable experience both for him and perhaps for you. Such disagreeable happenings, however, do clear the system and if you are wise you will say: 'I have done enough mischief; I will no longer heap sweetmeats on the one I love. When I see him needing understanding and help I will give him of my wisest and my best'. But good advice is not always the best gift, do not forget. The best help you can give to your brother is to be loving, understanding, sympathetic; sympathise with his aims, sympathise with his aspirations, and if he wants to take a certain path do not say 'I should not do this', but rather 'If you feel that is the path anything I can do to help I will do. I am with you all the way, my brother, in sympathy, in love, but you must work out your own salvation; I cannot do it for you.' Have I made that simple enough for you to understand the subtlety of this lesson of love?

When you learn to love, wisdom grows with you. We always couple wisdom and love, because real love begets wisdom. You cannot separate wisdom from real love. If you love, as we have told you before, you do not put yourself first (which is what you do when you hand out boxes of sweets; that is merely gratifying yourself, it pleases you to please your child). Real love is putting the spiritual good, the growth, the evolution of your brother first. You want to see him growing in spirit, in character, in strength of purpose, and to this end you give him your all. May we indicate a trifling and simple way of love: you may be very busy, full of your own affairs, with so much to do that you do not know how to accomplish everything; someone comes along who is obviously poor, not in purse but in the spirit, poor in love, poor in health. The temptation is to push him on one side because you have no time to be bothered, but love says: 'Other things can wait. This is my brother; his troubles are as real to me as my own.' But do not let that brother waste your time. If you are the wiser, gently lead him to unburden his heart to you—reasonably quickly—listen and use your very best endeavours to see truth for him and to say the kind, gentle, constructive things which

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may mean the turning point in his life. That is one aspect of love. Never be too busy to listen to a brother in need, but at the same time let wisdom come in, your wisdom which says 'I am the stronger, maybe, in this situation, so I will conserve my time but give him my best in so far as I can help'. So simple, oh so simple, and it may not seem very important to you, but it is these little things which help to bring us close to the flaming heart of universal love.

He who would love is always very careful in speech never to hurt anyone. Some good and fine people think it right to call a spade a spade, and to say exactly what they think. They think that to be outspoken and forthright is a fine trait. Well, it may be developing a love of truth up to a certain point, but we are talking tonight about love. The pupil of the Master of Love is always very careful not to hurt another, and that not only in human life. Here arises that old question about killing beasts. Please do not ask me that again tonight. The inner urge to love will naturally bring a shrinking from hurting any form of life. There is so much wanton cruelty, thoughtless cruelty, cruelty to children through ignorance, cruelty to the animal world through selfishness and greed. To use a simple illustration: your little dog wants a walk, he wants a drink, a bone; to fulfil those needs is to love the dog. To pick him up and make a fuss of him is not love, but sentiment—that he does not want.

The illustration I give shows the difference between self-indulgence and love. To caress the animal is not love; to love it is to look after its needs. So also with flowers—another little thing: the nature kingdom is brought under the care of civilisation; man takes upon himself to grow flowers or to cut flowers, or to have them to decorate his home. These flowers are sensitive, they have life force in them and are dependent upon your love. They call for loving attention, they want *feeling* for them. One on the path will love the animal and the plant realising that these are forms of life even as he. He will respect the animal and nature kingdoms as he will respect his human brothers and love them.

You will say 'How can we respect them when they do things which outrage all the laws of life?' Respect that which you know dwells in that brother—the light of God striving for growth and expression. True, some children draw pictures the results of which are not always beautiful, but they are doing their best. Our brother may be drawing or showing a picture to the world which is unattractive, but it is a form of expression and growth and, in a way we do not always appreciate, a form of service to the earth humanity—a very difficult thing for you to understand: that so-called evil and ugliness can be a form of service, but it is so. The attitude of one who loves is to endeavour to recognise the good being contributed to life. Let us do our very best to refrain from hurting any living creature—this is love. If there is something which has to be said, and if said in one way would be hurtful, try to choose the loving way. Say it gently; give a great deal of thought to it and put it in the kindest and most loving way—a slash with a sword can be painful!

We have given you some homely similes tonight; [we] have been simple perhaps in trying to show you what it means to love, to grow that flaming heart of love in your breast, but all these qualifications are necessary before the greater initiations are possible. Next week we shall talk about another development: an inner and private development which may take place alongside the qualifications enumerated. It is not enough that we renounce and learn to

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love, we must also become conscious of an inner development: the opening of the windows of the soul. Some will tell us that the qualifications of which we have been speaking are not necessary for the inner development of the inner faculties, but the only safe way—as far as we ourselves can see—is the way of self-discipline on the outer plane, together with the inner development of psychic and spiritual faculties.

I am sorry that I have to leave you, but we do enfold you in love; every one of you here we hold close to a big heart which loves you. White Eagle does not speak of himself but of the greater heart behind. This great love is enfolding you, and so long as you are willing to be enfolded in this heart of love it will hold you and give you sweetness and comfort and strength, it will give you nobility of character, it will give you inspiration to go on bravely on your allotted path, it will give you companionship, it will give you love and joy indescribable and will in time reveal to you the glory of God's life.

We thank Thee, Father—Mother God.

Amen.

The search matches with either words and phrases, which appear in the text, or the following 'key' words and phrases, which are similar in meaning to those in the document:

Perseverance, balance, compensation, kindness