



by Jim Gordon,
President of ILM

WHAT IS LOVE?

Love. Love is something that all of us want. Is love something we can purchase, box up, wrap in pretty paper and send to someone? Is love something that we can purchase at a floral shop and give to someone? Is love something we go out on Saturday night looking for? Or, is love something spiritual that you can't put your hands on or see or taste, and yet you trust that it is out there somewhere and you will someday find it? Just what is love, and where do you find it? That is my question to you. I do not know if there is a 'right' answer. You may have many different answers depending upon your mood, or the time of the day or week or month. You may have given up on ever finding love—or you may be sitting across the breakfast table right now with your love. So, once again I ask, what is love? And where do you find it?

I can remember walking through the mall once when I was 23. I was buying this and that, filling bags with items, and filling my credit card as well. I did not know why I was there on this day shopping for all these things. All I knew was I needed to be there, shopping. Finally, after several hours and after looking through many stores, looking for this 'something' I needed, and after making many purchases, I sat down. I sat down and began to go through the bags to see all the items I had bought. As I looked through the bags, I kept feeling as though I had not found what I came to the mall for. After going through everything, I sat there realizing that much of what I had bought I did not need. I might use it, but I did not need it. I realized also that what I had in the bags was not what I came to the mall for. So what did I come here for? I realized that I had been shopping like this before, looking for something, the right something, the 'needed' something—and here I was, back looking for it

again. I decided in that moment not to get up and go home, nor to shop my way further through the mall. Instead, I decided to sit there in the mall, with people walking by, and see if I could come to an understanding of why I was there. Why did I need to be in the mall this day, shopping the way I was shopping? What was it I was looking for and not finding? Why was I willing to get myself further into debt, filling my credit cards and creating stress and worry for myself in the process?

I sat there for quite a long time looking deep inside for the answer. I looked and waited, waited and looked, but no answer came. Finally, I got up and made my way out to the parking lot and to my car. Just as I got to my car I heard a voice call out my name. I looked up and it was a former girl friend. She came over with her many bags and said, "Looks like you love to shop like I do!" In that moment I knew that here was a key awareness. I did not like to shop! If I really needed something I would go into a store, find it, buy it, and get out. That is, unless I 'needed something' like I did today. What did I need today? And why did I not find it?

As I drove home I began looking at that weekend. Friday night I had gone over to a friend's home to have dinner and play Monopoly. Saturday I went out to a club to drink and dance. I was also looking for someone, that right someone who would love me and whom I would love. I wanted that someone who could fill me with the feeling of being loved. And once again, like on so many Saturdays, I went home alone, unloved and depressed. And so on Sunday I went shopping, looking to fill the emptiness with 'something'. Maybe I could find love in the mall. I looked at the bags and all I had bought as I had moved through the mall, looking for love. I realized in that moment that I was not going to fill my emptiness and longing for love with *things*. What I was looking for was ... love.

Love continues on page 10 ►

“AND GOD SAID”



by Steven McAfee,
ILM Minister

The Bible opens with the story of God creating life through the power of His Word. “And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.” Each time something new is created, it is prefaced by the statement, “And God said ...” God spoke, and through the creative potency inherent in His speech, worlds sprang into being.

The text goes on to say that God made mankind, “... in His image and likeness.” As a result, we too have the power of speech, and with it we too create worlds. Oh, it may not seem like it. My words certainly do not appear to have that kind of power. When I say, “Let there be light,” no new light springs forth. If I say, “Let there be a tree,” no tree is suddenly manifest. So, it is questionable how much power our words have over nature. But—they do have an incredible power over the human heart. How often have you heard words that moved you—stories that brought tears to your eyes, words that moved you to sudden shame or sudden realization, or songs that lifted your spirit? The words we speak out loud are like seeds, and they produce fruits after their own kind. We are like verbal Johnny Appleseeds, planting seeds wherever we go when we speak. Many fall on rocky ground and wither away, doing little good or harm. But when we speak to the ones who love us, ones who are in our care and keeping—their hearts are like carefully cultivated soil, and our words enter easily and take deep root there. Can you not still recall words said to you in childhood, words that gave you confidence and hope, or words that brought you pain and despair? These words linger long after we’re gone. Great words and terrible words—when we speak, we bless or curse those who hear, lifting them up or casting them down.

Years ago, when I was in the banking business,

there was a man who had a reputation as an honest mortgage broker, until the day someone passed on a rumor about him having been involved in a bank fraud and embezzlement case. The truth is, he had been investigated in that case, and found completely innocent. But once the story went around the town where he was now working, some people began to stop referring customers to him. Those who did come often came with a suspicious eye. He could see it, and it broke his heart. For years he had worked to establish himself as a competent, ethical, and trustworthy broker. One person with one careless story had changed all that.

So, I have been listening carefully to speech lately. I listen to conversations I hear in the mall, at restaurants, at workshops, and in our home. And I am learning to hear myself. Sometimes I hear myself talking about others, passing on tales—not maliciously mind you, just sharing things I heard about someone. But the stories often contain subtle judgments against that person, or subtle hints about their character. I also hear the way I speak to people when I am impatient or preoccupied or annoyed with them. I’m not talking about “big” moments of emotional trauma or major incidents, just everyday conversations and interactions. I don’t always like what I hear. The speech that sometimes comes out of my mouth is not the person I am inside, or the kind of person I want to be.

So, this year, I have decided to work with my words. Are they kind? Are they true? And, even if true, are they necessary? We do create new “worlds” with our speech—worlds of trust and safety that allow for innocence and intimacy ... or worlds of doubt and disparagement that support neither the listener nor the speaker. In Proverbs 13:3 it says, “He who guards his mouth protects his soul.” And, it seems to me, not only his own soul, but also the souls of those around him! When God looked back on the worlds He had made, He saw that “... it was good.” When we look back on the “worlds” our words have created this year, may we be able to say the same. ▲

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES

CALENDAR CLASSES & PROGRAMS: MARCH – JUNE 2004

PRESENTED BY JIM GORDON:

For additional information, call 512-306-1056

WEEKLY CLASSES: Jim's weekly Austin class is held **Tuesdays 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm**, ILM Center, Franklin Sq. Bldg, 3724 Jefferson, Ste. 100, Austin, TX. No charge.

Each class includes spiritual teaching, practical exercises, group discussion, and meditation. Jim helps participants to become more deeply in touch with the Spirit within.

PRESENTED BY BRIAN YEAKEY:

SPIRITUAL COUNSELINGS: Brian is available for spiritual counselings.
Call 512-306-1056 to schedule an appointment.

These counseling sessions are offered as a service for assisting people in awakening to the Spirit of who they truly are, in living the day-to-day reality of Spirit in their lives, in bringing their lives into greater alignment with walking the spiritual Path of Sound and Light, and in experiencing all the Loving that Spirit has to offer.

Please allow 60 minutes for your session and come prepared with specific questions. Sessions can be done in person or over the phone. They are tape-recorded and the cassette is given to you at the end of the session. There is no charge for this service; however, donations are welcome.

WORKING WITH SPIRIT IN RELATIONSHIPS

with ILM Ministers, Jim Gordon and Brian Yeakey

DATE: Saturday, April 3rd, 2004

TIME: 9:30 AM - 7:00 PM

PLACE: ILM Center

Franklin Sq. Bldg, 3724 Jefferson, Ste. 100, Austin, TX

Donation

This workshop will focus on working with Spirit in creating greater intimacy in all of our relationships, including those with ourselves and with God. We will explore how to effectively communicate with ourselves, others and God so that we can more fully experience the Peace, Loving, and Joy of Spirit.

To register and for further information please call Laura Doggett at: 512-306-1056.

Forgiveness Workshop

with ILM Ministers, Jim Gordon & Brian Yeakey

DATE: Saturday, April 24, 2004

TIME: 9:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

WHERE: London, England

LOCATION: Mayfair Conference Centre, 17 Connaught Place, Marble Arch

DONATION

In this workshop we will look at how we can use forgiveness in our lives to assist us in letting go of attachments, judgments, resentments, hurts, pains, and upsets. In understanding forgiveness we will see how forgiving can bring us back into the loving essence of who we truly are.

And on Sunday, **May 2nd** there will be a:

SPIRITUAL SHARING and Q&A

with **JIM** and **BRIAN**

TIME: 2:30 pm - 6 pm

WHERE: The Ascott Mayfair, London W1 **PH#** 0207 499 6868 (Call Hotel for directions.)

DONATION

INITIATION and SPIRITUAL COUNSELINGS

~ Brian will be available for
spiritual counseling sessions:

~ Jim and Brian will be available for initiation
for those who have been approved.

WHEN: April 26-30, 2004

To schedule counseling appointments with Brian Yeakey, to register and for further information please contact: Kenneth Gray, 147 Devon Mansions, Tooley St., London SE1 2NR, **PH #:** 0207 407 4112.

ILM REGISTRATION FORM: Please fill out the form below to register, and if you wish to make a donation send a check (payable to Jim Gordon) along with this registration form to: Kenneth Gray (see address above).

Forgiveness Workshop – London, England

(Please print.)

NAME(S):

EMAIL:

ADDRESS & POSTAL CODE:

DAYTIME PHONE:

EVENING PHONE:

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES CALENDAR

PRESENTED BY LAURA KESTEN:

For additional information, call Laura Kesten at 512-894-0992.

STORIES UNTOLD: *Have you heard your “calling” to write? Have you answered it yet?* In this program, we attend to our own personal callings to write—to write from the heart about our life experiences—our tragedies, our triumphs, our insights, our wisdom, our awakenings, and our opening hearts. We do this through the healing words of our own *untold stories* as we write them down on paper, and then share them (optional) with a loving, safe and supportive group. (No experience is necessary!) Cost: \$125 per weekend.

STORIES UNTOLD—Michigan: APR. 2-4, Kellogg Biological Center, Richland;
JUNE 13-19 (Intensive) Martha’s Cottage, Saugatuck; AUG. 6-8, OCT. 1-3, DEC. 3-5, Kalamazoo area
STORIES UNTOLD—Texas: The Hill Country Lighthouse Dripping Springs, TX \$100
MAR. 24-30 (Intensive, Cost-TBA), MAY 14-16, JULY 9-11, SEPT. 10-12, NOV. 12-14

365 DAYS OF LIVING CONSCIOUSLY: What if you had one year to live? How would you want to live it? Would you want to make more money? Want a new car? Want more time partying, socializing? How ‘bout finding a partner who would meet your desires? Or might you want your year-long journey to be about living each day mindfully, with integrity, living it authentically? And might you want the year to include forgiveness, acceptance, and loving? Perhaps, you’d even want each day to begin with sitting in the heart of God through meditation. *What if you could live each day this year consciously and deliberately?* Join us NOW!

Third Sunday of each Month 2 pm-4 pm ILM Center, Austin, TX Donation

A CIRCLE OF WOMEN: 7-9 pm ILM Center, Austin, TX No Charge

MARCH 5: STRETCH THAT BODY! Oxygenate your blood by gently moving your body. Learn simple Yoga stretches. Heighten our experience of “freedom” with Ecstatic Dance.

APRIL 16: COWGIRLS GAME and RAPIDOUGH GAME! Come and play two great games this Friday. Laugh your heart open and have a blast with a group of fun-loving women.

MOVIE NITE – 2000 YEARS OF CHRISTIANITY: 2000 Years Of Christianity.

Episode IV: Cross and Sword, V: This Side of Heaven, and Episode VI: Saints and Demons. We’ll make the popcorn! You bring your own non-alcoholic closed-bottle beverage.

APRIL 9 Friday, 7–9:30 pm ILM Center, Austin, TX No Charge

RUMINATIVE RETREAT: Experience this weekend in silence, and contemplate Spirit. Take time to notice your breathing and breathe deeply, eat your food slowly and taste your food, notice the spring flowers hidden beneath the winter rye, stare at the night sky’s stars for as long as you’d like. Meditate, journal, read, paint, take photos, sleep, stretch your body, walk, eat well, sit by a night fire, relax. Give yourself this gift!

APRIL 23-25 The Hill Country Lighthouse Dripping Springs, TX \$75

ART DAY: Experience a few hours of artfully doing whatever you’d like, using paint, chalk, markers, or whatever the medium you choose, with other art junkies. (Creative processes are offered based on individual requests.)

MAY 23 Sunday, 12 noon-5 pm The Hill Country Lighthouse No Charge

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES CALENDAR

PRESENTED BY LAURA KESTEN: (cont'd) For additional information, call Laura Kesten at 512-894-0992.

CAFE HOP WRITING DAY: We'll meet at a cafe in Austin, order coffee, tea, soda, or water, maybe a scone or bagel, and write. Then, we'll hop to another cafe and do it all over again. And, if time permits, we'll hop to a third. Writing prompts are given to get the pen in motion. Have fun filling empty pages with story. Sharing is optional.

JUNE 5

Saturday, 9 am-3 pm

TBA - Austin, TX

No Charge



COINS FOR KIDS

by Bill Stratton,
ILM Minister

gifts that she had bought on the ILM shopping spree for the project.

B

y the time you read this newsletter I will be in my new home,

in my new home town of Austin, Texas. It is a time for celebration for the move, and the loving journey it has been for me.

On the last leg of that journey I was in Austin in December, looking for a home, when I was

fortunate to be able to participate in the wrapping of gifts for ILM's Coins For Kids project. ILM had received over \$7000 in donations for the cause of purchasing Christmas gifts for children in need (and their families) in the Austin area. As I arrived at the Austin ILM center people were already busy wrapping the gifts that they had purchased the previous Saturday. And, Oh! My God! What a mountain of gifts there were! And, I wondered ... how will we get all this wrapping completed within 3-4 hours? With lots of luck!

I moved to a table where a lady from the Kalamazoo area sat already at work with her bags of gifts. We exchanged greetings, hugged, she explained what to do, and I proceeded to handle a variety of gifts for a number of needy families. She told me, with a delightful gleam in her eyes, that she was wrapping the



There was such a loving and playful spirit in the room, and I became so grateful that I could participate at least in this way with this process of giving. Before I came to Austin I thought that with all my hunting for a new place to live that I may have to put aside the Christmas experience for the year. Like many I usually decorate my house, put up a

tree with plenty of ornaments, and display Christmas lights outside to celebrate the holiday spirit. This year, not having had the time for that, I surrendered to 'whatever will be will be'. Well, magically and simply, in that room with all the ILM volunteers was



COINS continues on next page



Coins For Kids



Our Coins For Kids Christmas service project was filled with SHOPPING ...



WRAPPING ...



and LOTS OF FUN!

Coins For Kids photos by Doug Godbey and Jim Gordon

Coins (continued from page 6)

by Bill Stratton

Coins for Kids, including the shopping and the gift giving! More fun ahead! ▲

the spirit of Christmas, of giving and unconditional loving. Christmas had not passed me by!

Amazingly, even with the socializing going on and the many hundreds of gifts that had to be wrapped, we were finished in less than four hours!

Once again, thank you ILM for all the joy, peace and loving you continue to awaken within me. And I look forward to fully participating next year with



ILM Events in Ft. Wayne, IN

1. WORKING WITH SPIRIT IN RELATIONSHIPS

with ILM Ministers, Jim Gordon and Brian Yeakey

DATE: Saturday, March 20th, 2004

TIME: 9:30 AM - 7:00 PM

**PLACE: "Brigade of Light" meeting room at the YMCA Villa
2000 N. Wells St., Fort Wayne, IN**

Donation

This workshop will focus on working with Spirit in creating greater intimacy in all of our relationships, including those with ourselves and with God. We will explore how to effectively communicate with ourselves, others and God so that we can more fully experience the Peace, Loving, and Joy of Spirit.

And a ...

2. Q&A Session



with Jim and Brian

*an informal sharing, discussion,
and question & answer session*

DATE: Sunday, March 21st

TIME: 2:00 PM -5:00 PM

PLACE: "Brigade of Light" (see info above)

Followed by a ...

3. Dinner



TIME: MARCH 21 AT 6:30 PM

PLACE: "Parlor" banquet room at

Don Hall's Guesthouse Restaurant

To attend, you must register in advance with Steven McAfee at 260-485-2167. We will order off a special menu with a number of options, including vegetarian. Limited to the first 24 people who register.

For further information on any of these events call Steven McAfee at 260-485-2167.

ILM REGISTRATION FORM: Please check the event(s) you will attend, and if you wish to make a donation send a check (payable to ILM) along with this registration form to: Steven McAfee, P.O. Box 5139, Fort Wayne, IN 46895.

FT. WAYNE EVENTS: **WORKING W/ SPIRIT IN RELATIONSHIPS**

Q&A SESSION

To register for the **Dinner** call Steven.

(Please print.)

NAME(S):

EMAIL:

ADDRESS & ZIP CODE:

DAYTIME PHONE:

EVENING PHONE:

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES CALENDAR

PRESENTED BY STEVEN MCAFEE: (cont'd) For additional information, call Steven at 260-485-2167.

"KNOCK" PROGRAM: The following workshops and retreats are open only to those **already** enrolled in the year-long "KNOCK" Program, in which participants focus on deepening their spiritual life through daily meditation, prayer, study, and devotional practices. Meeting locations and costs will be announced to KNOCK Program members in advance.

RETREATS:

MAR. 27-28 Sat. 9:30 am-Sun. 3:00 pm Don Hall's Guesthouse Hotel Ft. Wayne

WORKSHOPS (on the fourth Sundays of the month):

APR. 25, MAY 23, JUNE 27 2:00-5:00 PM Brigade of Light room, YWCA Ft. Wayne

CDs Now Available For ...

SEMINARS BY JIM GORDON

1. *A Simple Way –
The Path of JLM*

4. *Abundance I and
Abundance II CD Set*

2. *The Path of Sound and Light*

5. *Our Right Relationship With God*

3. *Understanding The
'Inner' Pathway*

6. *Lord, Make Me Worthy &
The Master In Your Heart*

To Order: Each CD is \$9.00 except for the Abundance I & II CD packet, which is \$15. (Please include \$3 per order for shipping and handling.) Checks may be made payable to **Inner Light Ministries** and sent to: Inner Light Ministries, P.O. Box 164332, Austin, Texas 78716-4332. Please include your name, address and phone number. *Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery.* Please see next page for full list of ILM products.

Love (continued from page 1)

by Jim Gordon

And I found myself asking the question, "What is this love that I am looking for, and where do I find it?"

This question started me off on a search that eventually brought me to the knowing of love, and to the action of loving. I realized after many years and much looking that love is not in things of and in the world. Rather, love is something that is found inside of one's self. Love is something we come to know from within. I found love and the movement of loving through the action of meditation. Through the action of sitting down, closing my eyes, and

'going within' I was able to connect into the divine inner loving spirit of myself. It was here, within myself, that I found the loving that I had been longing for. And, having found it, I am able to go out into the world in loving and be in the loving with everyone and everything. No longer am I looking in the world for love, rather I am going into the world to share my loving. And as I share my loving I find that I am ever filled with more loving, for as I share in the action of loving I am ever being filled. So now, if I find myself feeling alone and empty and beginning to look into the world for love, I know to sit down and go inside in meditation, and connect back into my loving. Once I have done that inside, I can go outside to live the golden rule, "Love your neighbor as yourself". ▲

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES MATERIALS LIST

AUDIO TAPES & CDs OF JIM GORDON

Each tape and CD is \$9.00, except for the Abundance I & II CD packet which is \$15. Only the titles with the CD icon next to it are available as a CD as well. Two titles together indicate different lectures on each side.

CD/Tape

- A SIMPLE WAY—THE PATH OF ILM  (2003)
- UNDERSTANDING THE 'INNER' PATHWAY  (2003)
- THE PATH OF SOUND AND LIGHT  (2002)
 - WAKING UP IN SPIRIT (2001)
 - WHAT SEPARATES US FROM OUR LOVING (2001)
 - A FREQUENCY OF CHANGE FOR A NEW MILLENNIUM (2000)
 - A SOUL'S JOURNEY (1999)
 - FOCUSING ON CHRIST (1999)
 - GUARDIAN ANGELS (1998)
 - SOUL VS EGO (1998)
 - ANGELS (1997)
- (MANIFESTING) ABUNDANCE I } CD Set  (1997)
- (MANIFESTING) ABUNDANCE II } (1997)
- SENDING THE LIGHT (1994)
- AURA CLEANSING WORKSHOP (1994)
- AWAKENING TO YOUR INNER LIGHT *and* CALLING IN THE LIGHT (1994)
- KEYS TO INNER COMMUNICATION (1992)
- YOU AS A COMMUNICATOR, YOU AS A CREATOR *and* A MEDITATION (1992)
- MOVING INTO SOUL CONSCIOUSNESS *and* COMMUNION CEREMONY (1991)
- MEDITATIVE TECHNIQUES (1991)
- COMMUNICATION THROUGH DREAMS (1991)
- THE LEVELS TO SOUL AND BEYOND (1991)
- OUR RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD  (1991)
 - SONGS OF PRAISE TO GOD *and* A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF RELATIONSHIPS (1990)
 - THE PATH OF NEUTRALITY (1990)
 - UNDERSTANDING CHRIST CONSCIOUSNESS (1987)
 - INNER REVELATION *and* A FLOWER FROM HEAVEN (1986)
- LORD, MAKE ME WORTHY *and* THE MASTER IN YOUR HEART  (1985)
 - FROM HERE TO ETERNITY *and* RESPONSIBILITY (1984)
 - HEALING AND COLOR THERAPY (1980)

ILM TAPES ON MEDITATION

TWO MEDITATIONS

Sacred Place Meditation
Forgiveness Meditation
by Jim Gordon



THREE MEDITATIONS

Starry Sky Meditation, A Healing Meditation & Balancing The Consciousness Meditation
by Jim Gordon

MEDITATION AND THE HEALING PROCESS
by Brian Yeakey



PRACTICING MEDITATION—
CONNECTING WITH THE DIVINE
by Steven McAfee

ILM BOOKS

BY JIM GORDON (\$6 each)

- LOVE AND LOVING
- THE KNOWING OF GOD
- THE STAFF OF THE SHEPHERD

ORDER FORM

(A replacement copy will be enclosed with your order.)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

ORDERING INFORMATION:

Each tape and CD is \$9.00, except for the Abundance I & II CD packet which is \$15. Please add \$3 postage and handling per order (not per item). Checks may be made payable to INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES and sent to:

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES
P.O. Box 164332
Austin, Texas 78716-4332



THE PATH OF LEAST DISTRACTION

by Laura Kesten-Beaver, ILM Minister

About a year ago, a friend of mine and I went to Key West for a 'writing vacation'. We chose Key West because of its relaxed atmosphere, mild climate, sweet breezes, and ocean wherever we looked. Our belief was that with an ocean view, we would be inspired to write. After all, we figured, if Ernest Hemingway settled in Key West for a time, he must have felt inspired there.

At dinner one evening, we began to talk about what it takes to be a serious writer—to write well, to stay inspired and focused. We decided that there were those who were naturally gifted, but that, on the whole, most writers probably improve their skills by writing every day. As with a musician, or a chef, or one who is learning to ride a bicycle, it's, "Practice! Practice! Practice!" I can still hear my second grade teacher saying this to our class as we learned to write in cursive.

But what does *practice* take? It takes dedication, and perseverance, especially when nothing seems to come. However, we decided, not always does it require inspiration. That seems to be a bonus when it happens—but to always wait for inspiration probably would be a death sentence to the writer. After some thinking, we agreed that it was imperative for the serious writer to sit at his/her desk each day. And when an experience of inspiration *did* evolve, we'd be sitting there to receive it. Because she and I love to write, we also agreed that by simply sitting at our desks, a delightful feeling of excitement almost always bubbles up, which in itself is a kind of inspiration. Perhaps, then, it was up to us to take action, demonstrating to Spirit that we really, *really* want it—meeting Spirit half way, or 'priming the pump'. Therefore, 'showing up', sitting down and practicing writing every day, we agreed, must be the first steps in becoming a serious writer.

The day before we were to leave, my friend and I took a bike ride over to Hemingway's home for a tour. As we peered into his studio, our tour guide told us that Hemingway built a catwalk from his second story bedroom across the courtyard and into his second story studio above the garage. The guide said this was because Hemingway didn't want to be distracted from his

writing by going downstairs, through the house, across the courtyard, and then back up the stairs to his studio. I turned to my friend and said, "Aaah! Taking the path of least distraction!"

And so, the question we've since asked ourselves whenever we want to be focusing on our writing has been, "Is what I'm doing right now traveling 'The path of least distraction'?" And for me, I am finding that with this question in the forefront of my mind, I am becoming more aware of the many distractions in my life in general. And therefore I'm being more conscious about the choices I am making.

For example, I came to this question when I needed to be focusing on writing this article. For days I'd been conversing with Spirit about what to write—more of a monologue really, because I knew I had a deadline but I kept finding other things to do, making them more important. It wasn't until I sat at my desk and began to write *something*, that I was then having a true conversation with Spirit. That is when I heard myself ask, "Is what I'd been doing leading me onto 'The path of least distraction'?" Of course my answer was, "No." So I got a cup of coffee, sat down at my desk and began. I showed up, met Spirit half-way, and this article got written.

Lately, I've started to ask this question with everything I do. For me, it's the question that has been most helpful in keeping me on track with my meditation. After first becoming aware of those things that are distracting me, I then make a conscious choice to turn from the distractions, and instead 'show up' and begin to practice, to meditate. I'm also moving away from having to feel 'inspired' to meditate, or allowing myself to get discouraged when I don't have 'experiences' in my meditation. Simply 'showing up' and sitting, having my time with God, 'primes the pump' which creates this overwhelming bubble of joy and gratitude.

There are so many distractions in the world, in our lives. It is only through becoming aware of what distracts us, then making conscious choices to show up and practice, that we will ultimately travel this "Path of Least Distraction." ▲

INNER SERVICE



by Brian Yeakey,
ILM Minister

“The greatest gift we can give is the gift of love.” This statement is one that we’ve all probably heard at one time or another. But what does it really mean? And how do we go about giving this gift of loving?

One of the things that I’ve learned over the years of following a path of Spirit and meditation is that first I had to become aware of and learn what loving really is. I made this search a priority of mine, so that I would know for myself what that is. As I discovered more and more what loving was for me, I found that I approached things differently within myself and with others around me. I realized that how I treated myself, and others, was with more loving, and with a focus on loving, in all ways. In situations where I would go into reaction with someone (or myself), or where something upsetting would happen, I would look at these things with loving. And by looking at them in loving, I would respond more truthfully and caringly. By responding this way it would bring things to a balance and peace within myself and others or the situation, whereas before there would be upset and discord. By being loving I could more clearly see answers and solutions to how I could do things and handle my life and all the different relationships and situations in it. It helped me to be responsible and practical, which made my life much simpler and easier to handle. As all these experiences kept happening, I was realizing all the benefits that come with being and doing in loving. I loved all that was unfolding in me and around me, and it inspired me to keep doing more.

The longer I kept at this the more I realized what loving is. And the more I realized what loving is the more I began seeing the ways in which loving ‘moved’. I realized in my awareness of loving that it had a movement to it. And as I inwardly opened to the movement of it, I began to see how it would move through me and out to others. All I had to do was open to loving and allow it to move within my

own consciousness. Sometimes I would simply ‘be’ loving inside of myself and see it or feel it going to others spiritually. Other times I would do something for someone as an expression of that loving. And many times I would share it verbally by saying kind words or having an honest, caring heart-to-heart talk. I expressed it in many different ways. I would do it in whatever way felt the most loving in the moment and trust that that was perfect ... and it always was!

I saw that as I allowed the loving to move through me and to touch others, it also touched the loving inside them. And as my loving touched the loving inside them, I saw that it created an opportunity within their own consciousness for them to open to the loving and allow it to move within their consciousness as well. It was in this movement that I became aware of the process of loving and how it works. And then it just became about how to continue staying open and in the movement of it.

I realized that this movement of loving is the giving of loving. I had to first allow the loving to move within myself (the receiving) before I could allow it to move through me (the giving). And when I allow it, it does move. Also, I discovered that as I allowed it to move through me by sharing it with others, I received more. And the more I received the more I had to give. It became a process of continually opening and expanding in receiving loving and giving loving. It reminded me of the two Golden Rules: Love God with all your body, mind, and soul. And love your neighbor as yourself. As I loved God with all my body, mind, and soul in meditation, I became aware and awake to God’s loving, and I could receive God’s loving. And as I loved my neighbor as myself, I was giving God’s loving to others from that loving within myself. This, the giving of God’s loving from within myself, is what I call an ‘inner service’. To me, this is the greatest service I can give. Meditation helped me to receive God’s loving and service helped me to give God’s loving. And this ‘inner service’ of giving God’s loving is: “The greatest gift I can give.” ▲

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

ABOUT ILM

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES (ILM) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the development and balancing of the fourfold nature of the individual. Towards this goal, it provides education and services concerned with the integration of the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical aspects of the self, and also provides publications and materials that aid in this process.

Among ILM's fundamental tenets is that we truly are "temples of the Holy Spirit." As we seek and express this presence within, we find the peace, love, joy, and wisdom we all so earnestly desire. The many services of ILM are geared towards this path of individual unfoldment—such as meditation, study, and service to humanity on an individual and group basis.

ILM also offers initiation into the meditation practice of "The Path of Sound and Light," an inner path of spiritual awakening.

Please write or phone for more information about ILM.

An Excerpt from *The Master In Your Heart*

"It's just that simple. It's just that easy to go deep inside of yourself and to touch the doorway to your Soul. It's almost too easy. It's almost too simple. The trick is you've got to use it daily. If you really want it to be effective in your life you have to do it daily! Because that's the only way that the Soul then can align itself with you and begin to function in this life, and begin to bring you to a point of upliftment where you're liberated, and there's no need to return once again to these realms of life. It's up to you. You can read a book, you can go to lectures, you can do a lot of things. But until you stop and sit and go within it's not going to mean a whole lot. That's the way to find God. God is there waiting to give to you in an unconditional manner, but you've got to 'go in' unconditionally and open up to his love in order to share in it."

—Jim Gordon

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