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A Message from Jim

In my counselings these days, I seem to be hearing a lot of people asking, "What am I really supposed to be doing here?" "What is my mission in life?" "Where do I need to go to do my life right?"

Mainly what I say is that where we *are* in our lives is where we need to be; that we need to look and begin to see how we can make those things in our lives work that aren't working for us now. As we begin to get those things in order, we usually begin to see that there is no better place than right here and right now, because this is the place of opportunity. This is where our greatest opportunities for growth and upliftment truly are, and this is where our next lessons really lie. If we can stop looking "out there" at the greener pastures elsewhere, we'll begin to see how really true and right this place is for us.

In 1986, we moved into a cycle where the challenge we are presented is one of change through change and not through destruction. Instead of necessarily tearing down and building anew, our task is more to work within the structure that exists and see what changes can be made to promote harmony and joy in our lives. This does not mean that changes, sometimes big changes, may not have

to be made in our individual lives in order for our lives to fall more into place, but it's not necessarily through total destruction.

The attitude with which we embrace our challenges is particularly important; it is peace, joy, and loving that we seek, and it is only in the heart of the loving child within us that we have the hope of finding them.

The child is one who first and foremost functions from love. The child only knows loving at first and knows little else but love. He or she responds to love or the lack of love, and if we can get back into that loving consciousness of the child inside us, we'll begin to see the beauty, the joy, and the true loving of life – because a child, in its loving, loves and accepts everything and everyone. Until something "out there" pushes it away, it's always right there loving. So what we need to do is recognize the child in us and stop pushing that loving child away, and then allow it to come into our expression each day. Once we do that we'll begin to see life from a different perspective and with a greater clarity. With that clarity, we can begin to see what needs to be done next – what steps help us to get from here to there, what will help us become more one with our own selves and get solutions and not just more questions. In order to do this, we must first find that child within us once again.

Some people have a hard time finding the loving child inside, and what they might want to look at is getting a reference point in their memory that they can "go to" – a memory of being in a very

loving, childlike space. It may have been a birthday party when the cake was brought in. It may have been a special vacation or a fishing trip. For me, it is when I picked out a puppy for myself when I was a child. Whenever I think back to the face of that puppy and the love and joy of that moment, I can always reference back to it and find that childlike, joyous, and loving place that I can then bring back from within. If we can find such a reference point, then we have a place to begin.

So, find something that will help you get in touch with that child within, and then build upon it, and this may be an easier way than trying to cognize it – trying to get a mental understanding of it. Get the feeling of it, see if it works for you, and go from there. ■

UPCOMING NATIONAL RETREAT

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with Jim Gordon, Steven McAfee, and Nick Martin

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THE LONGING FOR HOME

by Steven McAfee

For most of us, when we were very little, we had a very simple view of God. God seemed very accessible and very present, although perhaps mysterious. We felt as if we could talk to God just like talking to an uncle or a parent. It was a simple and direct relationship. He was, to many of us, a very accessible companion, constantly on our side, and the world seemed a relatively safe and pleasant place to explore.

Progressively as we aged, we replaced such a simple perspective and built a kind of artificial world that was of *man's* making and not God's. This new perspective was more hostile, more self-centered, and, most importantly, fear-based rather than love-based. We began to shift our focus and perceive the cruelty and injustice in the world – the things that aren't fair, aren't nice, and aren't safe.

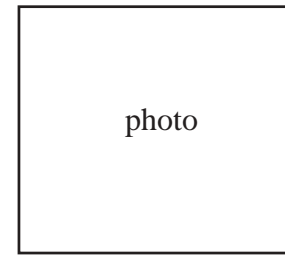
When children pray for things *in the world* and those prayers aren't answered, it is sometimes devastating. The child has a very limited range of explanations, and the only possible reasons he can think of are: he wasn't good enough; God didn't hear him; or God didn't care. It seldom occurs to him that his prayer *not* being answered might truly be better for him in the long run, and without parent figures to offer him a range of explanations that still display the *goodness* of God, the child begins to develop doubts.

When we start school, we en-

ter a world that is complex and confusing, with all sorts of demands about how to behave, what is "good" or "bad," and so on. Our sense that God is on our side becomes even more threatened. We may vaguely remember that we used to have this close relationship with Him, but we are no longer sure whether it was real or just imaginary, like Santa Claus. Often we continue to believe that God *does* exist, but that he is no longer our companion, *not* always accessible, and *not* on our side. Now, perhaps, He has become a distant, all-powerful figure that sits in judgment upon us – if we perform properly, we can be rewarded, but if we fail to perform, we can be punished severely.

And so God has become less approachable and less predictable. We begin to experience fear in the world and carry that into a fear of God. And the fear of God is at the root of almost every other emotional and psychological problem that people start to encounter: the fear of losing a loved one; the fear of not having enough in the world; the fear of being abandoned; the fear of rejection; the fear of being unworthy... Almost all of these in some fashion trace back to the essential fear – either that God is not good, or that God *is* good, but He will cause us to be separated from Him and His goodness because of our unworthiness. And so we battle all these complexes and never get to the simple heart of things – our fundamental relationship with God.

In order to re-establish our personal relationship with God and our sense of well-being within ourselves and in the world, we must indeed "become as little chil-



dren." We must open our hearts and begin to re-awaken our childlike sense of wonder and faith. We must look with our hearts once again for the things that truly bring us joy, and as we start following this joy, by whatever path we've come, it will lead us back to God. This reopening of our hearts begins to change the way we look at the world. We begin to see where we were blind before; how there *is* justice behind apparent injustice, and love where there seemed only emptiness.

As we elect now to make our choices from that sense of joy inside, instead of the shadow of fear, it begins the greatest transformation in us. This "change of heart" brings us back to that perhaps forgotten sense of who we truly are as children of God. Once again, life will appear simple, beautiful, and safe, and we will know that we are loved regardless of the choices we make, and that God is our constant companion.

So, it is time to rediscover the childlike innocence that allows us to put aside our burdens and begin the journey home. It begins in the heart of the child within. As we find that simple place once again, we experience the truth of Jesus' message, "Come to me, ■ you who labor and are overburdened, and I will give you rest."

Adapted from Steven's forthcoming book edited by Nicholas Martin. It is one of several books currently being developed as a service of ILM.

ON THE BULLETIN BOARD

Steven McAfee

A truly gifted teacher and the Educational Director of Faithful Heart Center, Steven offers a broad variety of seminars and retreats in Michigan and Indiana, as well as Thursday evening classes in Fort Wayne covering various aspects of spiritual development (on a love offering basis). For more information please call Steven at:

(219) 485-2167

Faithful Heart Center

Operating from Grand Rapids and Fort Wayne, Faithful Heart sponsors seminars and retreats in Michigan and Indiana; also weekly study groups and an on-going metaphysical training program. The retreat, "Just for the Love of It," will be held at Camp Mac (Fort Wayne) July 14-16, and children are more than invited. For details, please call Marilyn Schuiling at:

(616) 887-7841

Nick Martin

An ILM minister, Nick is our newsletter editor, a personal development specialist, and the author of *An Operator's Manual for Successful Living*. He will offer a retreat entitled "On Relationships" in Topeka, Kansas, August 2-4. This retreat will be on a \$75 suggested donation basis. For further information, contact Sue River:

(913) 233-3149

THE ROLE OF THE WAYSHOWER

by Nina Russell

Baton Rouge, LA

The many different denominations of Christianity certainly view Jesus in varying ways. In metaphysical circles, Jesus is usually viewed as "the great wayshower" – the one who, by word and example, shows us the way forward in our own spiritual evolution. Although he is seen as a son of God, we are all seen as "sons of God" (men *and* women, as we are all equally the offspring of God). In the Lord's Prayer (Mt 6:9), Jesus began with "our Father," to indicate that God was not only his Father but the Father of us all. See also 1Jn 3:2: *Beloved, now are we all sons of God* – not in the future but right now.

"God created man in his own image" (Gen 1:27), and in truth we all have within us the qualities of God. Just as the seed contains the plant and all its fruits latent inside it, so each of us is like a developing seed, with all the potentials of God latent within us,

gradually lifting ourselves upwards and unfolding according to the perfect plan of our heavenly Father.

Jesus is so often known for his life of sacrifice, but when we understand the real meaning of the word "sacrifice," it is easy to see that his whole life was one of sacrifice, and not just his death. "Sacrifice" derives from the Latin *sacer* (sacred) and *facio* (to make), and Jesus' entire life was devoted to "making sacred." His death on the cross would have been without meaning had it not been for his outstanding *life*.

As sons and daughters of God, each of us has the potential for great spiritual power. Every one of us has a direct line to our Father, and no longer can we put the responsibility for our spiritual development on Jesus or anyone else. Nor do we sit and wait for someone else to pray or intercede on our behalf. The teachings of Jesus bring mankind into a greater *personal* awareness and unfolding. By no means do they make him a conformer, obedient to ecclesiastical authority. Instead,

they strengthen his special uniqueness and allow him to more fully express his true individuality. All this is accomplished by discarding limiting human theories and opinions and replacing them with true spiritual understanding.

Jesus came into human form in order to show us the way. He came that we might have life more abundantly, that we might experience the kingdom (consciousness) of God while still on earth. For those who have truly understood and applied his teachings, this has in fact been so. Jesus was indeed the Great Wayshower as he set an example for those who come after him, and the example he set has never been surpassed. ■

NEW CASSETTES AVAILABLE

ILM has a growing list of available cassettes, including the recent April retreat on "Relationships" with presentations by Jim Gordon, Nick Martin, and Steven McAfee. Please write for a free listing.

ABOUT ILM

Inner Light Ministries (ILM) is a non-profit outreach organization founded in the fundamental principles of ancient and esoteric Christianity. It is dedicated to the development and balancing of the fourfold nature of the individual. Towards this end, it provides education and services concerned with the integration of the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical aspects of the self, and with the development of publications and materials that aid in this process.

Among its fundamental tenets is that we really are "temples of the Holy Spirit." As we seek and express this presence within, we find the peace, love, power, and wisdom we all so earnestly desire. The many services of ILM are

geared towards this path of individual unfoldment – through meditation, study, and prayer on an individual and group basis.

Service to humanity and the planet is its second major emphasis, and ILM encourages individual service, in any of a wide variety of possible forms, as a vital aspect of our daily experience.

Please write or phone for more information.

ILM STUDY GROUP IN HONOLULU

Jim Gordon, the founder and President of Inner Light Ministries, will offer a weekly ILM study group in Honolulu beginning on July 3rd. It will focus on a variety of areas of personal growth and spiritual development, such as meditation and dream interpretation, and other areas in which the group has interest.

Meetings will be held most Wednesday evenings from 7-9 PM at:

108 Kuine Place
Honolulu, HI 96816

For more information contact:

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