

Let's All Be Simple-Minded

a message from Jim

When I was eight years old and was about to start my first day at a new school, I had an experience in which an inner teacher came to me and said, "Jimmy, don't let them complicate your mind. God is something that is very simple. If you stay simple within yourself, God will always be right there inside you. But if you let them put a lot of complex ideas into your mind, you will find that God will have to be very complex in order for you to understand Him, and you will never understand Him that way. So, try to maintain simplicity so that you can know the simple God."

This was a very powerful experience for me, and after that, I tried to always live up to the idea that he gave me: that God is simple, and if I could maintain my simplicity, I would always be able to find God inside me.

I had some difficulties with that as I grew up, though. I remember at one point a teacher at school was saying something about simple-minded people having to be institutionalized, and for some time I struggled with the idea that maybe I was going to have to be put away somewhere because I was going to be simple, too.

As a child, I would often go and sit between the houses in the neighborhood and just talk and pray and share with God. It really was the most important time of my day, and of my life each day. And I would talk with the radiant beings that used to come and talk to me as I sat there in my inner silence.

Several years later, that same teacher that had told me about simplicity came to me once again and said, "The christ of love exists today. You must find the christ of *love*."

He really emphasized that word *love*, and in my prayers I began to ask, "But how do I find love?"

Then another teacher immediately answered, "It's about time you asked."

Then he explained to me that, "Just as you've been praying and meditating to receive from God,

you can also go into an open *pursuit* of God."

I was excited. Instead of learning about God and His creation, I could go directly for God. I wasn't going to go for information any more. I wasn't just going to talk to Him or the beings that would come to me. I was going to go into the experience of God!

But it wouldn't be quite so easy. First, I had to learn about my mind and emotions, because I was really getting myself caught there. With all that was going on in my teen-age life, I was losing sight of simplicity and getting caught up in so many things.

"Your mind is like ticky-tacky boxes," my teacher said, and he took me to a lab where some scientist was working and thinking about his work. I kept seeing that, in his mind, he was just putting things in boxes and closing them up and then putting them on shelves – again and again, just putting them in boxes and then setting them on shelves.

"See how everybody categorizes?" the teacher explained. "They stuff everything into boxes, and then that's where it's supposed to be – in a box. I call it, 'ticky-tacky boxes,' because once you put it in a box it's awfully hard to get it out of there. It's 'ticky-tacky' – sticky and gummy, and once you're stuck, it's hard to get free, because you get into the habit of trying to please the mind."

He began to show me how to move beyond the mind, how to concentrate all of my focus just into the simple and direct loving of God. After a lot of practice, I found that I could actually begin to move out into God and truly find Him inside of me.

As I moved out in this active meditation, I began to find a straight path of loving. As long as I stayed in loving, I could stay in the experience of God, but if I went into anything else, I would go off that path and back into His creation again, not His loving heart. So I began to focus *just* on the loving of God.

One day, I heard the voice that had come to me as a child, "Now that you know the simple love, go and find out where I am, for I am everywhere. I exist in everything, because love is that which brought forth creation. It is love which keeps all in existence. Without love, you could not exist, nor could all of creation exist, for all is God manifesting His love. So, go out now and do service unto love. Become the living love." ■

ON THE BULLETIN BOARD

Steven McAfee

An ILM Minister, Steven offers a broad variety of seminars and retreats in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio. He leads Thursday evening classes in **Fort Wayne** on various aspects of spiritual development as well as Sunday evening worship gatherings. For details, please call him at (219) 485-2167. *Surrender*, a new meditation and music cassette by Steven and composer-Music Therapist, Randy Romero, has recently been released (\$10 each plus \$2 for shipping). To order, please contact:

Randy Romero
P.O. Box 5229
Fort Wayne, IN 46895
(219) 482-5440

Angel Lights along the Nile

Lithographs by Arthur Douët

This magnificent series of color lithographs is once again available. In cooperation with Jim Gordon on a 1984 visit to Egypt, these outstanding paintings were executed by the Jamaican artist, Arthur Douët, and later transferred to lithograph form. These signed limited editions are only \$65 each plus \$8 for UPS. For a free color brochure, contact:

Neil Meili
P. O. Box 9767
Austin, TX 78766
(512) 698-0910

ILM Study Materials

ILM has an expanding list of materials for group or individual study, including dozens of cassettes, books by Steven McAfee and Nicholas Martin, and past issues of our newsletter. Four new study booklets by Jim Gordon should be available soon. Please write or call for a free listing.

CommuniCreations –

The Creative Power of the Spoken Word

our next ILM/Faithful Heart retreat with
Jim Gordon, Nick Martin, and Steven McAfee

September 18-20, 1992

**Fort Wayne Coliseum
Fort Wayne, Indiana**



Communications are a key link in the creative process by which we shape our individual worlds. We are all born with creative potential, but how well we manifest our inner dreams and serve our inner Spirit is greatly determined by how well we communicate within ourselves, with others, and with God.

This retreat will be practically-oriented, and registration will be limited to allow greater personal interaction. A suggested donation of \$95 covers registration and meals (\$85 if received by September 1st). Lodging is available free of charge in the homes of local participants on a first come, first served basis, and transportation from the airport can be provided with prior arrangement.

To register or for further details, please call:

Marilyn Schuiling: (616) 887-7841
or **Steven McAfee: (219) 485-2167**

ILM-Faithful Heart Harvest Celebration

October 9-16, 1992

Camp Mack, Milford, Indiana

Marilyn Schuiling of Faithful Heart Learning Center and ILM's Steven McAfee will lead a very special week-long series focusing on "gathering the gifts of God's goodness." A self-contained week-end retreat will be followed by five days of classes and events for those who wish to participate on an all week or just a single day basis. For details, please call Marilyn at (616) 887-7841.

The Search for Happiness

by Steven McAfee

In any group of people, in any moment of time, we would probably find a long list of goals and aspirations and a wide variety of prayers and dreams – whether in the areas of personal relationships, career and finances, travels and adventures, and on and on. Yet, whatever the topic, whatever the time period, and whatever the culture, there is a thread that holds all of our hearts in one simple common bond: we all would like to be happy.

In this universal quest for happiness, we seek it in many different ways – some in material possessions, some in the praise or respect of others, some in their labors and worldly achievements, some in the success of their children. The longing for happiness moves in us all, and when we can't find it, we often lose hope and perhaps become bitter or even numb. In times of despair, we may look for just momentary comforts and settle for temporary escapes, but when happiness seems unattainable, we may lose our sense of purpose and our lives lose their meaning as well.

But many of us do find our goals being reached, with wonderful moments of worldly reward, yet so often these are only short-lived. New burdens, concerns, or sorrows intrude, and happiness once more eludes us. And when we finally achieve what we've sought for so long, it often loses its luster. Its power to thrill us just drifts on away, and we're left feeling strangely empty once again. We've been searching for happiness for so many years. Could it be so frustratingly just beyond reach? Is the eternal hope of lasting happiness really just a fairy tale, or is it possibly just a different perspective we need?

What if lasting happiness were not to be found by acquiring things in the world? What if the secret to lasting happiness was not only something simple, but something we already have? When we really look closely at our inner experience, we find that nothing really *makes* us happy. Although things may help us find happiness, no things do more than call forth a response from somewhere inside us where happiness lives. As long as we focus on the things that “come calling,” we never discover what

is really answering that call.

That answer from within is the joyous expression of God's presence in the loving soul within each of us, which already has abounding joy, and the way we come into that joy is by allowing that inner soul to be expressed in our daily experiences, and through us then into the world. It is that knowing of the soul that brings lasting happiness, and in truth we find our joy by giving, not getting, and by loving, not seeking love. What actually allows us to experience happiness thus begins with a shift in our thinking – from believing we need to attain things in the world to realizing that in any given moment we are free to be loving, and all we have to do in order to be loving is to bring forth our souls into outer expression. In every encounter, to the fullest extent of our ability, we can always simply choose to trust God and choose love.

Could such a simple perspective possibly be true? Well, the power of spiritual truth cannot be physically proven as such, nor can its depths be plumbed by the mind. But there is a way we can know: the proof of spiritual truth is demonstrated in the genuine and lasting transformation of the person who embraces it. We can try it and thereby find out for ourselves.

But let us remember that it is not our worldly lives that are radically changed. It is not that all challenges, suffering, or trials are suddenly removed as if by magic. Some people actually expect this and become disillusioned when they find that challenges remain in their lives. Instead, what we find is an inner well of joy that never runs dry, nor can it ever be diminished by the events of this world. All that we possess in the world can and someday will be taken away, but that treasure of love within our own souls no thief, not even time, can touch. It is eternally ours, for it is our truest nature.

No matter what our personal pasts and no matter what our present circumstances, no one is beyond the power of love to redeem and to restore us. God's joy was meant for all His children, but in the end, it is only found by those who choose to surrender their lives into His loving, by those who simply decide just to trust God and choose love. ■

Steven McAfee is an ILM Minister and our Midwest Coordinator. Please see facing page for details of his classes and upcoming events.

ABOUT ILM

Inner Light Ministries (ILM) is a nonprofit 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 Activities
IN HONOLULU**

Inner Light Ministries offers and/or sponsors a number of weekly study groups at its Honolulu location. An ILM study group meets on most Tuesday evenings from 7-9 PM, and a meditation group meets on Sunday mornings from 10-12.

Other worthwhile spiritual study groups are held on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings. Meetings are held at:

108 Kuine Place
Honolulu, HI 96816

For more information, contact:

Tom Beaver
(808) 732-8934

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES

P. O. Box 36
Center Point, Texas 78010

Phone: (512) 634-7269

Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Center Point, TX PERMIT #36