Am I Worthy

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Preface

Life is messy, unpredictable, and wonderfully complex. We go through a lot of stages as we try to negotiate our journey through each existence. Perhaps you have memories of things that happened to you when you were very young. I'm sure that you have memories, some of them unpleasant, of those awkward teenage years. Then, in your 20's and 30's, your ego started forging a way to deal with the world that became your persona, the way people saw you. But is that the real you?

The purpose of this small book, "Am I Worthy," number 4 in a series devoted to teachings by the Ascended Masters, is to make the reader aware of the assessments that you should make at some point on your spiritual journey. Most of you have been this way before. Some of you have been this way many times. Why do we keep having to do this over and over? If that question bothers you, you are going to have to come to grips with what and who you are, and where you stand with God. Unlike the other stories, I have included glimpses of some of my and my family's life stories to show the extent to which family karma can play a huge role in an individual's life. It also includes the confession of some of my sins, with the idea that some of these sin stories may awaken you to similar things that may have happened in your own life.

This is a universe built on love. You should examine your heart to see if you have learned to love unconditionally. A review of one's life is never fun, but it is essential. It causes one to examine memories of things that happened in the past that you would rather keep hidden in the closet. Sometimes those memories will be of family or personal relationships that have gone bad. The Masters state that no one can enter the kingdom of heaven if they harbor hatred in their hearts. Lord Jesus taught that we should forgive as much as seventy times seven. If you, like most of us, have people with whom you have had a falling out, and they are still alive, you should consider contacting them and asking for forgiveness. It may be awkward, but you will feel better afterward.

In this book you will find teachings from the Masters that will help you understand some of the hidden obstacles that have been preventing you from becoming one with the Will of God and one with the Christ Consciousness. If, like me, you would welcome any help to make your

handling of this life easier, as well as methods to reduce previous and current karma, then read on. You will find references to the other books in this series about the nature of the reality in which we live, a reminder of the powerful workings of the Spiritual Hierarchy and the help from the Ascended Masters that is available to all of us that are on our journey toward self-realization and eventual mastery.

Sources

As I touched on previously, this book was an effort on my part to bring together many years of study and contemplation and information from 20+ books into one place for the readers' benefit. Under no circumstances am I claiming origination or ownership of any of these thoughts and teachings. I have read and studied many more books and sources in addition to the ones listed below, and I apologize if I have inadvertently omitted any from my list, but these do constitute the majority of the material I have attempted to present.

The books on the material given in the 1930's:

Unveiled Mysteries Vol. I	Godfre Ray King
The Magic Presence Vol. II	Godfre Ray King
The I AM Discourses Vol. III	St. Germain
Ascended Master Instruction Vol. IV	St. Germain
Ascended Master Discourses Vol. VI	Various Ascended Masters
Ascended Master Light Vol. VII	Various Ascended Masters
The I Am Discourses Vol. X	David Lloyd
The I Am Discourses Vol. XI	St. Germain

Available through: St. Germain Press. 1120 Stonehedge Dr. Schaumburg, IL 60194

The books on the material given in the 1950's-1961:

Thomas Printz's* Private Bulletin, Books 1,2,3,4	*Master Morya's pen name
The Bridge to Freedom Journals, Books 1,2,3,4,5	Various Sources
Dictations	Ascended Masters
Electrons	Ascended Masters
Memoirs of Beloved Mary	Thomas Printz
The First Ray	Thomas Printz
The Seven Elohim Speak	Thomas Printz
The Seven Archangels Speak	Thomas Printz
The "I AM" Discourses	The Great Cosmic Being Mighty Victory*
Man, His Origin, History and Destiny	Werner Schroeder

*Note: This book was put together from dictations that were given through Mr. G.W. Ballard, who later became known as Godfre Ray King.

Available through Ascended Master Teaching Foundation, P.O. Box 466, Mt. Shasta, CA 96067

More recent publications:

Law of Life, Books 1 and 2	A.D.K. Luk.
Journey of Souls	Michael Newton, PH.D.
Destiny of Souls	Michael Newton, PH.D.
Edgar Cayce on Atlantis	Edgar Evans Cayce
Edgar Cayce on Human Origins	The A.R.E. Website

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Am I Worthy?

Chapter 1

The Challenge

No matter how long we live and how much knowledge we acquire, the question that seems to gnaw on us incessantly is: Am I worthy? What's the source of that question? The first thing that comes to mind: our conscience. And if you have a questioning mind like me, the next thought would be: well, what is the origin of conscience? The most common answer would be: From God. Of course, everything comes from God, but is it that simple? What part does my spiritual being play in this equation? To fully explore the complexity of the answer, we will need to review a bit of previous study.

If you have read my earlier books, you will understand that the author has based those books on lessons learned from the study of a significantly large number of books and documents that were given to mankind by the Ascended Masters in the last century. You can find a partial list of these Masters in my first book "A Spiritual Journey Through Time" (which is a free download).

To begin the exploration of the conscience question, the first postulation is that Humanity was initially created by God as fiery Spirit Sparks with raw spiritual potential in the "Big Bang." After coasting along as sightseers in giant suns for billions of years, our Spirit Sparks were assigned to a new sun and solar system (ours) that was being formed. **Here, God's carefully thought-out plan for the timely unfoldment of our Spiritual maturation would take place.** During the time needed to bring the Earth to its full flower, the beings that ensoul the sun, Helios and Vesta, who are known to the spirit world as the Sun God and Goddess, nurtured us from Spirit Sparks with only raw potential to White Fire Beings with unlimited spiritual potential. Do you understand what that means? **The implication is that we could become God-like**, depending on our motivation, understanding of the many lessons, and paths offered to us.

Our initial White Fire Being was referred to as "the I Am presence". The I am presence can be thought of as a fragment of the Divinity of God who, when Moses asked his name, God

said “I Am who Am.” (Some texts have it as “I Am who I Am.”) Our newly created “I am presence” was androgenous, in that it had both male and female polarities (Yes, **you have a polar opposite of yourself somewhere in the universe**). Eventually, those polarities split off, going on their own individual quest for learning and understanding, but with the goal of eventually teaming up to serve God after they had attained their own perfection. Their service would evolve over the years but would be focused on performing some function of administering the spiritual education of the beings that inhabit the universe or helping with the spiritual governance of the ever-expanding universe. Note: Helios and Vesta are examples of Spiritual Beings who reached one of the pinnacles of spiritual evolution in becoming the male and female Spiritual Beings who ensoul our sun.

Humanity’s I am Presence is multi-faceted in that for those who are incarnating on the earth, it has a total of 7 essential essences which we will refer to as “bodies,” the first of which is the I am Presence. The I am Presence exists in the heavenly realms and is the parent, so to speak, of the male and female spiritual beings.

Directly under the I am Presence of each one of those male and female spiritual beings is the **Holy Christ Self,** what you might say is the protype of the perfected Spiritual Being that we will eventually ascend into and “become” after we have mastered the lessons of earth life. It also has its’ existence in the heavenly realms. This was not always the case. When the pure spirits first came to earth, the Holy Christ Self was an integral part of the being. After the introduction of the “Laggards,” (those beings from another planet that were integrated into the human race early on) and the dark mist began to spread, the Holy Christ Self had to retreat to the heavenly realms because it cannot be associated with evil. Note, one big exception: Jesus was joined with his Holy Christ Self during the “Transfiguration” on the mountain, as witnessed by Peter, James, and John. (Matthew 17:1-8).

Under the Holy Christ Self is **the Causal Body**, which also has its’ existence in the heavenly realms and can be thought of as the storehouse of the “good” that we have accomplished in our sojourns on earth and in the heavenly realms. It is composed of concentric bands of the colors of the “Light Rays” that originally emanate from God. It gets its name from the fact that when we finally obtain enough “good,” (outweighing the bad), the accumulation of

good “causes” the Ascension to heaven to happen and the reunion with the Holy Christ Self. (According to the teachings of the Ascended Masters, **the Ascension and reunion with the Holy Christ Self is the ultimate goal of earth life and is within each soul’s grasp.)**

The earth-bound being is composed of 4 bodies. The first is the Physical body that allows us to function in the world.

Closely woven around our physical body is **the Etheric body**. Think of it as a pulsating light essence that extends up to 3 to 4 inches around the physical body. The halo that is depicted in drawings around the heads of saints is a good example. One of the Masters wrote that our soul resides in the etheric body.

Next out from the physical and etheric bodies is **the Mental body**. It is large because it is the storehouse of all the thoughts, lessons, instructions, concepts, memories, dreams and reasoning power of the conscious, subconscious and superconscious minds that use our brains.

The last and largest is the Emotional body. The largest because the minefield of the emotions is the most difficult body to control. You can picture it as extending out beyond the reach of your arms. Think of all the different reactions that you have: Peace, happiness, love, fun, brotherhood/sisterhood, lust, discord, fear, doubt, depression, despair, sorrow, anger, hatred, violence, etc….

So, getting back to our question about the conscience, the Masters teach that it is the Holy Christ Self essence which sends the whispering guidance to our conscience. **It is not actually God himself, but the still, small voice of the Holy Christ Self that mirrors the perfection of the Divine Essence of God that was contained in the original Spirit Spark.**

Again, if you have a questioning mind, you may want to know if there are different levels of conscience? That answer is a resounding “yes.” For instance, the divine beings serving under God, have clear sighted judgement, a will that is uncorrupted because it is in line with that of God, and the disciplined power to control their desires.

Human souls are at many different levels. We were given free will as a gift to see how we would use it. With that gift came the enormous responsibility of using our judgement to pursue only those things or results that are good and would expand God’s kingdom. When we are in the heavenly realms for initial training as a beginning soul or are there for additional training

between lives, we are contemplating the Mind of God, so we are in a penultimate "good" zone. **Because of the Fall from Grace, when we are sent to "schoolroom earth" for our lessons, we are imprisoned in flesh and blood human-animal bodies that have needs and desires and are also subject to the temptations of the devil.** How attuned we are to the whispering of the conscience versus the onslaught of negative emotions and the plethora of the false glitterati of the earth that is vying for our attention is the fulcrum. Therein lies mankind's primary challenge.

What led to the Fall from Grace? According to the Masters, the following is a rewrite of Genesis. This story is so complex, that the people of that time could not have grasped it, so therefore you have the story of the forbidden fruit in the Bible. **When our predecessors were first sent to earth some 4 ½ million years ago, they were housed in etheric thought-form types of bodies that would be invisible to our human sight. Their mission was to learn how to create matter through the power of thought** so that they could become co-creators with God. There were to be 7 different "waves" of spirits to come at different times.

During the early stages of the 4th wave, a council of high-ranking Cosmic Beings was called. There was a planet in a solar system that was nearing the time when it would be reabsorbed into its sun, and there were millions of souls on that planet that had been infected by the dark force and had not advanced enough spiritually to make the transition and would, if left there, experience the second death (the second death meaning that their body and soul essences would be turned back into primal matter for later use). The earth volunteered to take in these souls with the hope that their exposure to the "Innocents" of the earth would win them back for God. They would become known as "the Laggards,"

The net result of that experiment (which is spelled out in my earlier books) led to the opposite result. **The "Laggards" instead, infected the "Innocents." One of the things that they taught the Innocents was how to push their consciousness into other forms that were extant on the earth to experience those form's consciousnesses.** That experiment was exciting to the "Innocents." **This eventually led to the spirit's search for an animal type body (the ape,) that they could inhabit so that they could experience the "senses," (here the senses can be thought of as the fruit of the tree of good and evil) particularly the one having to do with sexual mating.** This was a rebellion against the Will of God and what is known as the Fall from

Grace. That was the genesis of the initial problem with animal type bodies, or more to the point, the reason why coming to earth today is such a difficult thing for the soul.

All of this prehistory happened very slowly with intermittent periods of spiritual progress and then regression before the dark mist fully covered the earth. It was about 1 ½ million years from the first advent of spirits on the earth to the ape-man period, and then about another 2 million years of the ape-man period. **Eventually, the Spiritual Hierarchy realized that our souls were only going backwards during the ape-man period and stepped in about 1 million years ago to try to change the dynamic with the advent of the 5th Root Race, clothed in a new human-animal body,** the one described in the Bible that was divided into the 5 racial types that are now extant on the earth, and was the precursor of what we look like today.

With the review of that background information, perhaps you can understand that the race has been carrying a tremendous amount of karma, so when our souls descend from the heavenly realms during the birthing process to inhabit these new earthly bodies, we are at the mercy of the quality of our parents and what they will teach us. If you are a new soul, the chances are very good that you will have excellent parents. If you are an old soul, the selection of your parents is based, to a great degree, on what you deserve. In other words, it is determined by how you behaved during previous lifetimes.

The earth-bound human soul is very much subject to being taught incorrectly once it turns its attention from the light of truth that it was exposed to in the heavenly realms to the mists of ignorance and selfishness that is part and parcel of earthly life and is the devil's curse on the world.

The new young child is trying to figure out how to survive in this strange new environment and begins to take note of what works for them. "Hey, if I cry, Mom or Dad come running. And, If I cry enough, I may get a bottle." So, the young mind is already learning how to manipulate the people in its life. **Archangel Michael gave a dictation in which he said that babies begin weaving the veil of darkness as young as the 4 months mark.**

Eventually, the child begins to understand the emotions that are connected to possessions. This is sometimes expressed when a neighbor brings their child over for a playdate and the visitor reaches for one of your child's toys or stuffed animals. Typically, your child will

grab the object, clutch it to its chest and say, “mine.” **That is a sign of the building of what I refer to as “the false self” ego.**

While you are teaching the lessons to the child that are necessary to enable them to conduct themselves properly in the world, they are also observing and picking up on your and your spouse’s negative habits. As they get older, **they will begin to program into their consciousness the opinions and prejudices expressed by you, their close friends, their schoolteachers and what they hear from the news media.**

As a child enters puberty, the hormones kick in. The interest in sexual copulation takes hold and can lead to all types of problems and challenges. This is where parents’ thoughtful attention and guidance is so sorely needed. I am of that generation in which parents didn’t communicate very well with their children. I am also of that group that came along before movies and TV shows were so sexually explicit. I got my idea of what a woman’s body parts looked like from my imagination of what was hiding underneath the one-piece bathing suits prevalent in those days and from the pictures in Playboy magazine. But nothing is left to the imagination today. That is a shame, because in my time, part of the thrill of the romantic sexual adventure was the discovery of the wonders of your betrothed’s body parts that lay hidden underneath their garments.

What I have learned from listening to preachers that deal with young people of the 21st century, is that today’s youth don’t want to be lectured on sex. So, I won’t lecture, I’ll just present some information as food for thought.

When Moses received the 10 Commandments 3470 years ago, one of the ten was about the sin of adultery. The youth of today might be quick to declare that the author of the Commandments didn’t mention casual sex between unmarried people, so, it must have been alright. **But no, to the contrary, in those days, virginity was absolutely expected of all brides; an unwritten part of Jewish law.**

Although Jesus didn’t directly mention casual sex, he was a good Jew, who would have hewn to the Jewish law. His teachings imply that celibacy is a gift, that one should learn to control lust, and that sexual union should be reserved for marriage.

The Apostle Paul, after being confronted by the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus (according to the Acts of the Apostles), spent a time, (it may have been up to three years,) in contemplation before he started his mission. He, as well as Jesus, encouraged people to remain single if they could, but otherwise advocated for sexual morality within marriage if they couldn't control their desires. He discouraged any immoral sexual behavior including all acts outside of marriage.

So there. That's what two of the New Testament's greatest spiritual teachers had to say about it. Let your conscience be your guide.

Getting back to the youth of today, if I may address you directly, beloved Heavenly Father, as well as my readers, they are bombarded from all sides by the sexual desirability quotient. Particularly the girls. Things like: How can I make myself more attractive? What do I have to do to make Joey like me? If only I had larger breasts! Sandra is already having sex with David. When can I convince Mom to let me go on the pill?

Somehow the phase of spooning, or not going all the way, that used to exist before the "free love" movement of the 1960's cracked open the door, has now been mostly cast aside. Who's responsible? A lot of people. Certainly, all of the different facets of the entertainment industry that could make money from glamorizing casual sex, beginning with the movies, television shows, books, magazines, recording studios, music concerts and then, later, the internet, etc. Then, add in the parts of the business world that cater to our egos: Purveyors of "fashionable" clothing, beauty products, grooming products, and the plethora of contraceptives that would be needed, not to mention doctors that provide face lifts, breast implants, tummy tucks, women's birth control devices, pills, and abortion procedures.

All those things were a boon for business, but something dark came along with the business boom. Women and girls were fed a steady diet of propaganda to change their inner moral compasses, which caused some to wonder, "Why should guys get all of the breaks? I should be able to do whatever I want. Life is short, I should be having fun and enjoying the moment. It's my body, I am in charge".

The net result of all of this, Heavenly Father and dear reader, was that the moral "walls" were torn down, there was no taboo anymore, and the guys got the breaks after all because

they didn't have to work as hard to get sex. **The great demeaning of respect for the dignity of womanhood happened, and hardly anyone noticed.**

Almost consecutively, the breakdown in family values began in the 20th century partially because so many of the mothers needed to go into the workforce to help support the family. So, they weren't at home for their children anymore (take the mother out of the equation and the child suffers). This was partially due to the inflation that came along with the large amount of government spending from World War II and on programs related to President Johnson's "Great Society."

Chapter 2

A Short Description of the Body's Atomic Structure

In case you don't remember, in my first book I mentioned that your I am Presence could have decided not to incarnate. It could have remained in the heavenly realms and become part of what is referred to as "The Heavenly Host". Those beings are perfectly content to stay there and contribute on inner levels. But those of us now on the earth were more adventurous, and the rewards are much greater for those who choose to incarnate. There are many different levels of responsibility that you could be chosen for as you climb the spiritual ladder, (proving yourself, of course, with each step) to help in the expansion of God's amazing universe, all the way up to becoming the spiritual essence of a sun.

The Masters teach that the essence of the body of the I am Presence (sometimes referred to as the Electronic body of the I am Presence) is composed of blazing white light. It is completely devoid of any impurity. It is written that all the electrons forming the atoms of the I am Presence emit each spirit's personal musical keynote and fragrance. Thinking way ahead and with that understanding, when you reach your own Christhood, you will be contributing to the music of the spheres.

The Holy Christ Self body is made up of the same type of electrons, but it is spinning at a slightly slower speed and is in complete harmony with the I am Presence.

The Causal body is also made up of the same type of pure electrons. Some confuse the Causal body with that of the soul. It has a somewhat similar purpose to that of the soul in that it is a way to read the overall "quality" of the entity's many lifetimes as a spiritual being, whereas the soul that is housed in the earthbound vehicle is primarily concerned with the current lifetime. At the time of the spirit's first venture to earth everything was positive in the Causal body because there had only been the "good" that had been added to the Causal body from having studied in the seven realms of God virtue that surround Helios and Vesta. The "bad" came along after The Fall from Grace.

The Emotional body is made up of electrons from the emotional realm, which is that of "the feelings." The emotional realm is the realm in which angelic beings exist. Angelic beings

gather around the Throne of God, absorbing his thoughts and feelings. For instance, God may direct one of the angels to visit Mary Cochran, who has just lost her husband, and deliver the "feeling" of sympathy or peace. The angel would go to Mary Cochran and do that and then return to God for the next assignment.

The Mental body is formed out of the substance of the air. The Etheric body is composed of the ethers, a substance that is finer than air, and in this case the Etheric body houses the soul and is used to connect the physical body with the soul (You can train yourself to see the Etheric body). The Physical body, of course, is formed out of the elements of the earth.

Within the physical body resides the heart, which is the organ that powers the physical body, allowing the body to function and the brain to learn and think. Within the heart's chambers is embedded a small flame (about1/16" in most people). The idea for this flame was envisioned by Sanat Kumara (The Ancient of Days) who, after the "Fall", served as the Lord of the World (see 1st book for full story). This "flame" is invisible to the sight but is three-fold and is representative of the "Presence" and contains the colors of the first three Rays of God. (blue, yellow/gold and pink). Everyone has this. It is what makes us a part of the vast family of God. The variable "mix" of the seven colors of the Rays (which we studied in the seven realms that surround the bodies of Helios and Vesta) is what contributes to an individual's uniqueness (again, see 1st book for full explanation).

When a seasoned soul/spirit finally reaches a point of spiritual awareness and begins to understand the challenges of earth life, it examines its' needs and goals. This usually leads to a decision to place its feet upon the spiritual path and devote itself to perfection. When this happens, the three-fold flame begins to increase in size and strength, becoming what some people in the East describe as the "golden man" within the heart. Ultimately, it will become a replica of your Holy Christ Self.

For many centuries and for many lifetimes, instead of emulating the original Krishna, or the Buddha or Moses or the Christ, we have used the energy sent to us by God to manifest a pattern of our own making. Most of the time, the result has not been good. Every time that we have sent out a negative manifestation, it remains in the atmosphere in the form of a dark cloud of effluvia in which mankind must breathe and function. This is particularly present around large

cities. (As an illustration: picture a dog going to the vet. When it gets near, it becomes highly excited and frightened. It is picking up on the "cloud" of negative emotions from other animals.) There is a protective principle called a "ring-pass-not," which prevents the human cloud from affecting other planets and solar systems.

When the soul decides to turn to God, it must redeem the mis-qualified energy that it has sent out over the eons. That is a part of what some people refer to as karma. Some of us have done some terrible things. Redeeming our thoughts and actions is what makes the path so difficult and challenging.

Those of you with a scientific background know that nothing is static. Even a piece of wood has electrons and atoms that are in constant motion. It is also true of your body. If you could see inside the body's cells, through the atoms to the electrons, you would see that both the atoms and electrons are always spinning. The next thing that you would notice is that they are probably not pure white, nor the pure color of any of the 7 Rays, because the impurity of the outer world has been drawn around them. Your attention to anything that is inharmonious or is not in line with the way that God would have you interact with his other children works as a magnet to surround the electrons with dark matter. The more the dark matter accumulates, the darker the appearance of the electron and the slower the electron spins. To be more succinct, the darkness of incorrect human thought is wedged in between the electrons that make up the atoms, causing the atoms to spin more slowly. In some cases, dark matter becomes problematic to your health when the organs of your body become weighted down and are out of sync with the rest of your body. So, one of the purposes of this chapter is to educate you on how you bring this on yourself and help you understand how to prevent the accumulation of dark matter.

If, for instance, we see a story about a government employee that has stolen taxpayer's money that was intended for children, and in an attempt to cover it up, has killed a co-worker whose wife is afflicted with cancer, we would probably get pretty upset. We would follow that story for days, or maybe weeks, letting our anger for the perpetrator simmer. Or if we listen to the biased vitriol coming from the major news outlets about certain political figures, we might form the wrong opinion and let the emotion of hatred simmer. Or if we discover that someone

has keyed our car, leaving a scratch down the length of the driver's side, we might feel like assaulting them. Or if someone drove their car into a crowd of people and killed our child, we might feel like killing them. Or if we discover that our wife is having an affair with our best friend, we would be furious with both, possibly leading to a very bad outcome. The examples above are mostly extreme cases, but perhaps you get the idea. Every thought that we clothe with a negative vibration harms our four lower bodies in some way.

The cell phone is a handy item to have. It can make communication and information gathering much easier. Where it becomes a negative thing is when we become addicted to it and the news. Some people can't go for as much as an hour without looking at their phone to see what is happening in the world or what is happening to people. The news is usually not good news, so anything that is upsetting in any way adds to the dark matter that accumulates around our bodies' electrons.

When I first read about this phenomenon I was stunned. It made me think back to when I was the happiest. It dawned on me that it was when I was so engrossed in my business career and family matters that I didn't have time to be concerned with the news. Once I retired, I began to keep up with the news and realized how upset I would get about the stories of crooked politicians, dysfunctional government agencies, the waste of taxpayer's money, child abusers hiding within the priesthood, the breakdown of the family unit, the dumbing down of our schools, etc….

You must decide what you should do with your news quotient. People should be informed because it is necessary to be able to exercise the powers of critical thinking about fixing things that are wrong or deciding how to vote. But you can probably learn all you need to know in one sitting with your smartphone for perhaps 10 to 15 minutes in the morning or evening. Be aware that most news sources are biased. They want to control your thinking. Ask your I am Presence to help you think in a manner that is in line with God's Will.

Be aware that there are bad actors in the world. You can probably think of at least 4 or 5 world leaders that you wish could be eliminated. The Masters warn that you are damaging your soul with those types of thought. They say that you must not arrogate for yourself the

judgement of right and wrong. Instead, you can decide that you wouldn't behave in their manner, while asking for them to be drawn to the 'Light".

In the first book we wrote about "qualifying" a thought with either negative or positive emotions. Qualifying means the amount of attention and emotion that we give to a thought. The positive example in that book was about seeing a new car that appealed to you and then visualizing yourself driving the car, showing it to your friends, and then putting it in your garage. The negative example was about seeing the car, and even though you liked it, deciding that you probably couldn't afford it. Guess who would most likely get the car? Those people who habitually think positive thoughts, visualize good outcomes, and treat other people correctly are usually the happiest in life because their dreams are more regularly fulfilled than the dreams of negative thinkers.

Chapter 3

Problems Navigating The Early Years

Lest you suspect that I am too hard on the fairer sex, Heavenly Father and dear reader, I will now confess some of my own problem thought patterns and sins.

I am the only child of a very dysfunctional marriage between a divorced alcohol-addicted man and a lovely, but somewhat naive Catholic woman. My mother was barred from receiving the sacraments of the church because of the "sin" of marrying a divorced man (details will follow in a later chapter).

At puberty, my hormones were raging, tearing my moral compass apart. I didn't know which way to turn. Should I listen to the priests, or follow the desires of my body? Like some other boys of that era, I experimented with masturbation and was absolutely stunned at the physical excitement of the ejaculation process. It only lasted a couple of seconds, but at that time of teenaged depravity and uninformed mind, it seemed like sex with a woman must be among the three or four ultimate reasons for living. I started dreaming of the day that I could get my driver's license and begin my pursuit of a girl with whom I could have sex. I didn't know it, but the devil and his helpers were working on plans of their own to confuse me.

One day when I was 14, I was walking to town which was just four blocks away. A young neighborhood kid that I knew fell off his bicycle, hurting his leg, and I helped him get home. His mother saw us coming and came out to see what was wrong. It turned out that it was a nasty looking scrape with some blood, but the kid was alright. After bandaging him, the mother invited me in for a coke and in a very disjointed way, we became sort of friends/friendly. The neighborhood rumor was that she had been in a tumultuous, argumentative marriage

It's been so long ago that I can't remember how or why I would sometimes drop by their house, but it was probably because she was a good-looking woman in her late twenties who was friendly to me, and that appealed to my young, lustful, and fantasizing ego. Fantasizing about mature women was becoming a habit. There was also an attractive single woman in her forties that lived a couple of blocks away about whom I would also have fantasies. Were these

fantasies a real problem? Yes, that ego and those fantasies had a way of hanging around way too long into my young adulthood.

One day I stopped by, and no one was home but the young woman. She was making the bed in the kid's room and invited me into the room to talk. She was wearing tight fitting shorts and a tee shirt. As I watched her bending over to make the bed, my wildest sexual fantasy got the best of me. I know that it was crazy, and I must confess my sin, Heavenly Father. I made a pass at her. You know the rest of the story, but that's how stupid, out of control and hormone driven I was at that moment. I still can't believe the lack of respect shown for the lady in that action. I did confess my sin to the priest.

I enjoyed high school, making good grades without much effort. We had very good teachers in those days and if you paid attention, you could leave high school with enough education to make it in the world. There were some teachers who made a lasting impression on me because of their passion for their work, others who had interesting personalities and one male teacher who we called "high pockets" because he wore trousers with suspenders that were jacked up so high that he didn't have the proper amount of chest showing, but there was one class in which there was a big distraction. Her name was Miss Hardy. She must have been at least 40 years of age, but she had a great-looking body, and I would sometimes get an erection just watching her. Fortunately, I don't think she ever knew how she affected me. Heavenly Father, I didn't count that as a sin, and maybe I should have.

At 16, I got my driver's license. There was an attractive girl who lived just several blocks away that had caught my attention, so I asked her for a date. We went to a movie and then found a place to park that had a certain degree of privacy. We had sex, but alas, it wasn't the exceptional high that I had expected. At the time, I didn't understand. She was pretty, sweet, and loving. All the things that you should ask for, but it just didn't feel right. I didn't call her again. Some weeks later, she called me to tell me that she had missed her period. I had used protection, so I doubted her and gave her the worst possible reply, "You should go see your doctor." We never spoke again. I'm sure that she must have hated me for my coarse response. Heavenly Father, my conscience still bothers me about that.

That was just the first of several lessons that you would teach me about reserving my sexual lust for someone that I really cared about. I now wonder if maybe the whole thing goes back to the soul's search for the polar opposite that split off from the I am Presence. I wonder if my subconscious thought that finding that part of me might make me feel "whole" again.

After several trials and misses with other girls, I found a girl that I really cared about in my hometown, and we went "steady" for 2 years. Everything was good, in fact it was absolutely great. I was crazy about her. I don't know if you can really be in love at that age, but I thought that I loved her and that she was the "one." I joined the Marine Corps Reserve (6 months active duty and 7 ½ years of reserves) right out of high school to get my military obligation out of the way. She still had a year of high school left. I knew that the social whirl attached to one's senior year in that town might cause problems. True to my fears, the relationship didn't survive the separation, most of it being my fault. I said some callous things; the Marine Corps hardens you. After all, you are taught how to kill people. The hardened heart, however, was very much fragile and broken by the loss of my girlfriend.

That was not a good time of my life. I was nineteen at the time. I was overwhelmed by negative things and vulnerable to making mistakes. I lost my girlfriend. My best friend joined the Navy. Three other good friends went off to college and the last of my good friends moved to Texas. Our family was as poor as dirt, my father was dying, and when I came back from the Marine Corps, I had to provide for the family. I had been an A student in high school but had to come to grips with the fact that college was out of the question, so I began my search for a job. There weren't many good jobs to choose from in my little hometown, but I found a menial job at a local mill. It was boring, shift work and unionized. The only way that you could get ahead was if someone retired or died.

My job was to retrieve samples of the liquified wood pulp every two hours at various stages of the production process and deliver them to the lab, where a specialist would test them with chemicals. Then, I would take what was left of the pulp samples to a much smaller room and test them for consistency. This meant that I would make paper-like patties about 5 inches square and dry them. The results never seemed to vary more than a couple of tenths of a percent. The shift bosses were chemical engineers. They always checked the results of the tests

in the lab, but never seemed interested in the patties, so I figured that the important part of my job was delivering the samples to the lab and that the patties were just "make-work," which got tossed into the trashcan when I finished my shift. I compared it to the same type of make-work that I experienced while on active duty in the Marine Corp. Specifically, walking guard duty in the middle of freezing nights around old, decommissioned airplanes that didn't have any engines, instruments, or armament.

There was a waste disposal collection site that was outside of the mill in an area that led down to the river. The mill dumped the waste into the river. This site was just one of about ten to twelve sites from which I retrieved samples. It was not deemed as important as the production collection sites, so I only had to visit it once a shift. **My great sin at that job was that, at times, I guessed the consistency results of the sites instead of testing. I got caught by one of the shift bosses who, for whatever reason, was concerned with the waste particulate. I made matters worse by trying to lie my way out of it.** I couldn't blame anyone else like Eve did when she blamed the devil, but I suspect that the devil was rubbing his hands together with glee when he saw what I had done. **So, Heavenly Father, I confess that I cheated and then lied about it.** Shame is a terribly insidious emotion. I am still overcome with shame when I review those memories. Even now, in writing about it, my first inclination was to try to sugar-coat my sin. But no, my inner being told me that truth is always better. The shift boss could have fired me but didn't (an example of your grace, Heavenly Father)? Guarding the planes or making pulp squares that no one looked at made no sense to me at the time, but neither one of those two assessments were mine to make. The purpose of the pulp squares turned out to be important sometimes, and walking guard duty around meaningless objects was meant to teach discipline.

Within a couple of months, an injury happened to someone in the mill. and I moved up one notch to another boring job. At this point, I was just coasting through life, living from paycheck to paycheck with absolutely no future in sight. I must admit that the close call on being fired didn't immediately change my interest in working at the mill. It took a little while for the gravity of the situation to fully sink in. When it did, I came to understand that every job is important and should be treated like it is a sacred trust. I then decided to try to do more than was expected of me, which served me well later in life.

I missed a big love-life opportunity. I was told by a friend that while talking with my girlfriend, he had discovered that there was hope that I could probably salvage the romantic relationship. I called her and we had a hopeful conversation, which led to me making yet another call. On that next call, her mother answered and told me that she was out on a date with a guy that I knew. I didn't try again. In fact, I gave up because he was a good-looking guy from a wealthy family that was further up the social ladder than me. In other words, the osmosis of the years of my mother's rhetoric (which will be covered later) about our social status had done its work on me, I just assumed that he was better than me and that I didn't stand a chance. **Heavenly Father, forgive me for accepting the worst, and for not even making an effort to win back the girl that I loved,** I am thoroughly ashamed.

There were a lot of distractions going on at the time that interfered with focusing on winning my girl back. A friend helped me set up an interesting job interview in Atlanta. The starting salary was not going to be great, it was less than I was earning at the mill, but it was my ticket to get out of mill work. So, I moved to Atlanta and while I was trying to begin a new life there, my father died. My mother was already financially dependent on me. The only thing that seemed to make sense was to take her back to Atlanta with me. As it turned out, **I clung to that new job like it was my only lifeline and, eventually, I did find a career path there, so you were good to me, Heavenly Father,** but these things sound like excuses, and my conscience still bothers me about the lack of confidence in myself (and you) and the things that I didn't know how to control at that time. Maybe those things were a part of your learning plan for me all along. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

Atlanta was an exciting town for young adults in the late 1950's-early 60's. There were a lot of attractive theaters, cozy nightclubs with dance floors, some really good music, and plenty of affordable places to eat. The "New York of the South" as some people called it; drew young adults from all the surrounding states who were looking to make their mark.

I met one of these people, a good-looking brunette, who we will call Charlotte, one of those from another state, who worked as a waitress at the Majestic restaurant in the Ponce De Leon-Briarcliffe Road shopping area. I made it a habit of dropping in there several times a week, with the hope of getting to know her. Eventually, I asked her out. She was a lot of fun. We

seemed to have the makings of a good couple and began to date several times a week. Eventually, sex became a part of our evenings together, but we never talked about love nor ever mentioned a long-term relationship. One night she said that she had to go home to help her mother who had experienced an extended illness. I didn't question her, show the proper concern, nor make any effort to contact her while she was gone. Not the correct behavior for a boyfriend, right? I did, however, run into her sister a couple of times and asked about her. The answer both times was "She's fine".

One day, a month or so later, the phone rang. It was Charlotte. "Hey, I'm back in town. Can we get together?" "Of course" I answered, glad to hear from her again and anxious to see her. I planned what I thought would be a fun evening. We went to a movie at the Fox Theater in downtown Atlanta. Afterward, we walked across the street to the Seven Steers restaurant for a burger, coke and one of their famous desserts. Over a plate of hot fudge cake topped with ice cream, I asked if she was back to stay. She looked at me very solemnly and said, "No. I had an abortion while I was gone. I'm just back here to get the remainder of my things from my sister's apartment, and then I'm going back home". She showed no emotion, but the message delivered a swift, solid kick to my gut.

I sat there, stunned. I didn't know what to say. She didn't mention if the fetus had been mine, but maybe she thought that I would assume so. In my defense, I didn't know if she had been seeing someone other than me in Atlanta or if she had a boyfriend back home. We had never talked about those things, so I didn't know what to assume. Obviously, the abortion was her decision, but if the baby was mine, she should have given me a chance to think about it. Honestly, I don't know what I would have done had she told me, but she took me out of the equation, leading me to think that what I might have said wouldn't have mattered. At least that's what I told myself at the time.

I was beset with conflicting emotions; respect for the girl, sorrow for what she had gone through, guilt over the thought of the abortion, a sense of rejection and in a state of shock in the way in which she had delivered the news. The drive back to her sister's apartment was quiet, each of us lost in our own thoughts. I never saw her again.

Heavenly Father, my conscience bothers me about the pain, guilt, and anxiety that Charlotte must have suffered. I also have thoughts about the young soul that may have been destined to use that new body. I am ashamed that when confronted with that crisis, I didn't know what to do or say. Some of it goes back to a flaw that I realize is part of my inner being, I don't handle what I perceive as rejection very well. I should have asked questions and given both of us a chance to clear the air.

My conscience is more developed now, but it wasn't at that time, and ever on the lookout for a pretty girl, my callous conscience didn't stop me from asking Charlotte's older sister out and she accepted. I should have felt some shame for that, and maybe she should have also, but at the time, I didn't. There were others after that, most of whom are just a blur, and some of whom I didn't treat very well.

I suppose that there is a plan for every soul. Part of your long-term plan for me, Heavenly Father, happened in a very strange way. One Sunday morning my mother and I were at Mass in a Catholic Church in Atlanta. After the service ended, I caught sight of a beautiful blond girl with blue eyes walking out with a young man. There was something about the eyes that awakened feelings within. I instantly knew that this was an important life-changing moment, and I turned to Mother saying, "If I can find a way to meet that girl, I will end up marrying her." I've never seen my mother move that quickly, but she was anxious to have me marry a Catholic girl and hopefully avoid the hell that she had been in. So she hurried out of the church, grabbed the arm of the priest, pointed out the girl, and asked If he knew her. As it turned out, he did know her and her family. He worked with the youth group of which she was a member. Mother told him that I would like to meet her. He said he would call her and ask if she would be interested in meeting a nice Catholic man. He really didn't know me from Adam, but what better recommendation than one from a priest?

So, I called her, we went to a church-sponsored dance, and within 6 months we were married. Now, You know all this, Heavenly Father, but the reader doesn't. When I saw her, I knew immediately that I was supposed to marry her. I didn't know why, but somehow, I understood that it was part of your plan for us. Note: I had still been in love with my high school girlfriend, and my wife-to-be was in love with another guy. But I pursued her, finally winning her

over. I learned something about myself then, Heavenly Father, that when my mind is made up and focused, I can be pretty convincing.

We had a tiny wedding in the Catholic church, a very modest reception in my wife's parent's living room, (I think they spent $300). Then we took a three-day honeymoon to Gatlinburg, Tennessee (for which I had to take out a loan), and on returning, settled into my little apartment. Mother was able to move to Virginia to live with a first cousin who had recently been widowed. So, Heavenly Father, you took care of all the messy details.

My wife became pregnant and gave birth to the first of our four sons at the 10-month mark, so we didn't have much time to even get to know each other well before we were thrown into the role of parents. She worked as an X-ray technician. A fetus can't be exposed to X-rays, so she had to quit her job about four months into the marriage, throwing us into a financial crisis. Those first few years were almost impossible. I don't know how the marriage survived them. The church rules didn't allow for the use of birth control, setting up some emotional barriers to the sexual union. Counting days on the calendar didn't work for us and three more sons followed. To add to the stress, every unexpected expense was critical, putting a different kind of strain on both of us, but somehow, we lived through them.

Both of us wanted our children to have a mom that was always there for them, so my wife didn't go back to work until the boys were grown. We have been together now for 6 decades. Was it easy? No. She threatened to leave me once, early on, and I threatened to leave her once, later. Neither one of us could bear the thought of leaving our children, so we stayed together, and I am glad that we did. We are alike in some ways but, for the most part, are very different, like two rough stones in a swiftly flowing river that rub up against each other polishing off the sharp edges. She is a beautiful soul, and one of the strongest women I have ever known. I have learned much from her.

I suspect that you might be interested in how I "knew" that I should marry my wife. Some people do wonder if there is anyone "meant" for them, so I will cover the subject in the next chapter on family karma.

Before I leave this chapter that contains confessions of some of my sins, I will relate other stories that still bother me to this day. The man who hired me for the job in Atlanta was

the grandson of the founder of the company which was a chain of retail stores in the southeast. He had the most compelling aura and personality that I had ever been exposed to. The realization that someone could be that dynamic was an epiphany of sorts for me. He immediately became my hero, and I decided that I would try to fashion my leadership style after his. We worked in the same store for about a year and a half before the inevitable happened and he was promoted to V.P. of merchandising for the chain. I would see him when he dropped in to visit the store, and I would try to come up with some type of challenging question to make sure that he noticed me because I knew that someday he would become company president.

I moved up through the company and eventually was given the opportunity to open a new store in a town in Florida. The store was very successful, and I became talked about as a candidate for bigger things. But the karma of my wrongful action in my job at the mill wasn't through with me yet. We had an attractive young lady that worked in the office as a cashier, posting down payments and mail payments from customers. My office manager, a very bright young lady, told me that something seemed amiss with the cash count. So, we kept an eye on the young cashier, and sure enough, she was stealing some of the cash. When confronted, she admitted that she was stealing to buy presents to impress her new boyfriend. I let her go but didn't press charges. Within the same year, I caught the credit manager in a lie. He was going to a pool room during work hours, instead of calling on delinquent customers, which was his reason for being out of the store. I had to let him go, too. His next employer didn't call me for references. So, it was like Fate was reinforcing the gravity of the lesson at the mill by giving me some key employees who would disappoint me.

After a couple of years, bigger stores did come along, we moved back to Atlanta and my luck continued to the point that I became a "fixer" that my hero, who had now become president, would sometimes call on when he had a problem store. But soon, a different kind of challenge came along. This is among the ones that bother me the most. There was a store with several branches in a large city that needed a manager. My hero was very high on a candidate who was a manager of one of our smaller stores and called him to the corporate office to discuss the job. After the interview, the candidate came by to see me. He asked me what I thought of the opportunity. I was surprised that he asked, but somewhat perplexed, because I

felt trapped. We had a history of always promoting from within. We needed a man there, and we had no other suitable candidates within the company. My hero was very excited about this candidate, but somewhere in the back of my mind, I had a doubt about whether this would be a good fit for the man. Factoring into my dilemma was my loyalty to my hero. If I advised the man against taking the job, I thought that my hero would know that it was me and might view me as a traitor. So, I took the company line and told the man that he should take the job. Unfortunately, It didn't turn out well for him. Heavenly Father, you know that I still think about that with great regret on sleepless nights.

Karma probably got back to me in that situation also. In my retirement years, I became friendly with a cardiologist to the point that we and our wives would sometimes meet for lunch after church. At one point, I needed a heart valve transplant. The specialist was a guy in my friend's office. After I met with the specialist, I came away with deep misgivings. I decided that I would ask my friend his opinion of the man. He told me that he was very good. I still wasn't convinced and decided to look for another alternative, because it was my life that we were dealing with. Two weeks later, they fired the specialist for incompetence. My "friend" had given me the company answer.

Chapter 4

A Study in Family Karma

This is a story about my family, but it is also a classic example of the far-reaching tentacles of karma.

My mother grew up in a prosperous Catholic family. She was an attractive woman and, I was told, had enchanted a number of suitors, but she waited until her mid-thirties to marry and then, she married a divorced man. Mother met my dad in the mid 1930's. People say that he was handsome and charming with a worldliness that probably swept her off her feet. No one could believe that she would elope with this older, divorced man who had left his wife and children. It stunned the small town where she was so well known.

My father-to-be, was a talented musician with one of the best tenor voices that I have ever heard. It could send chills down my spine. The Depression had an enormous effect on his life. He was living in a small south Georgia town when the Depression hit. Like everyone, he was desperate for work. President Roosevelt developed a program that was named the Works Progress Administration (WPA for short.) My father-to-be took a job with the WPA to travel to the cities of the south to help organize and teach church choirs. He was on the road most of the time. His then current wife told him that if he were to leave again, he should just not come back. At least, that's the story I heard. Was it true? I don't know. I still don't understand how he could leave that first family (a wife and 7 children).

My grandfather on my mother's side, was an Irishman, my mother's mother-to-be of Spanish descent. They got together in a very unorthodox manner. My grandfather was one of several brothers from a family that had emigrated to the little north Florida coastal community. My mother's mother-to-be and two older sisters were orphaned by one of the great flu epidemics during the 1800's and were taken in by the nuns in the local Catholic convent. There needed to be a legal guardian for the girls, and somehow my grandmother's future husband was appointed. That's how they met. He was some ten years older, but apparently, the union was meant to be. I was told that they had been happy.

I don't know the location of their first living quarters, but in 1900, my grandfather built a house that was on the same street as the church and convent. (It's still there.) They had five children and spent the rest of their lives in that house, so the church and convent played a huge role in their lives. The priest was a regular visitor for Sunday dinner.

My grandfather had a very successful business in the downtown area. He was doing so well that it was reported in the local newspaper that he had the first automobile in town. Their sons went to various academies, and the daughters were involved in many social events and took several ocean cruises. In other words, life was good until the Great Depression. Then, everything fell apart for that family. No one understood what was coming, and my grandfather continued to sell groceries to the townspeople "on account." As the economy worsened, people couldn't pay their bills, which brought down the business.

As a child, I was able to observe all my grandparents' children at one time or another. There were three sons. The oldest married a gorgeous woman with boatloads of charm who, I suppose, was the love of his life, but eventually, lost her to divorce. I met her later because she and my mother were friends. He then married her opposite, which baffled my young mind. His old age was beset by crippling arthritis. The second oldest son married a nice woman, but soon after giving birth to their only child, she developed muscular dystrophy and was confined to a bed for the rest of her life. The youngest son married a flirt. Do I need to say more? Mother's older sister married a man who turned out to be a "quiet alcoholic." My conclusion was that all of them led tragic lives. Initially, it caused me to wonder if happiness and success sometimes skipped generations, but now I chalk it up to karma, although I haven't researched their past lives to prove it.

I don't know much about the grandparents on my father's side except that they had been in the turpentine business and, like almost everyone else, lost the family wealth in the Great Depression.

After the newness of the marriage wore off, Mother saw the extent of Dad's drinking problem, but it was too late to get out because she was pregnant with me. She could no longer receive the Catholic sacraments, and she realized that I was going to be labeled a bastard in the eyes of the church. These things added to the guilt and shame that she felt.

My parents left the small town, (maybe to get away from the stigma) and settled in a big city in Florida, where my dad took a job running the USO club during WWII. The club was on the top floor of a large hotel. It had beds, showers, meals and at times, entertainment for the servicemen. So, he performed a great service for our warriors.

My first memory as a child was while I was still in a crib. I had been sleeping, and I heard a loud commotion coming from the living room. I don't know how I did it, but I climbed out of the crib, crawled out to the living room, and hid behind a chair. There, I witnessed a horrifying scene. My father was screaming at my mother in a drunken rage. It terrified me. This became a regular feature of our family life. It could occur multiple times each month. I was never able to trust him because of that, and to some extent, Heavenly Father, I realize now that it affected my sense of trust in you.

There were many occasions of drunken shouting throughout my early and teenage years, just once at me, but always at my mother. They always happened late at night, usually keeping us awake into the wee hours of the morning. I never saw him hit her, but while we were living in the city, a man in the next apartment heard the shouting and knocked on the door. When Dad opened it, the man hit my dad, giving him a black eye. I must have been only five or six at the time, but my young mind was okay with the outcome.

The arguments were most frequently about religion. My dad, a Presbyterian, just couldn't understand why Mother, who was labeled a fallen-away Catholic, relied so much on what the priests told her. I can still hear Dad saying, "He puts on his pants the same way as me." I suspect that the shame that she felt must have put a huge damper on the relationship, not to mention their sex life. **The irony of this was that in a previous life, my mother had split with the Catholic church. In this life, she was defending it. There you have the footprint of karma, working in her life.**

After the war, the USO club wasn't needed, so we moved back to the small coastal town. By that time, I guess that my parents reasoned that the distraction and horrors of the war may have blotted out the memories of their elopement scandal, but I suspect that Mother still lived within the shadow of shame when she was around people that she had known in the past.

Dad rented a business that had a bar, bowling alley and skating rink. There were two rooms in the back that we used for living quarters. Mother, God bless her, and I, at eleven years old, worked hard to help keep the business going, but Dad ran the bar, and that greatly contributed to Dad's drinking problem and the lack of profits. After three years the business failed. **We moved into my grandparents' house (who were recently deceased) because we had nowhere else to go.**

After Dad lost his business, an acquaintance offered him a job as a clerk at a local hardware store. Once I was able to drive, I worked there also, as a stock replenisher and delivery driver. I was impressed by the way that Dad interacted with people while he was sober. **It was difficult for me to reconcile the two completely different behaviors that he exhibited.**

Before I turned 15, my father had a hospitalized bout with cirrhosis of the liver. I heard the doctor tell him that if he took another drink, it would kill him. Dad decided that he would give up whiskey and drink beer instead. So, he consumed a six-pack of beer every night. When I saw what he was doing, **I realized that my dreams for my own life were going on the back burner, because he was going to die soon, and I was going to have to support my mother.**

To flesh this realization out a bit, I met a beautiful young girl, who was a member of one of the upper-crust families. There was real chemistry between us, and she wanted to date but said that I must first meet her parents. They invited me to dinner. After dinner, her father took me for a ride and asked me about my college plans. I was honest with him. I told him that my father was dying and that I was going to have to forgo college to take care of my mother**. The truth will set you free, right?** Well, indeed it did. I was "freed" of that tantalizing future relationship because the girl's father decided that his daughter couldn't date me. His reason: he couldn't see a future for me. Could I blame him? No. He was just looking out for his daughter.

Heavenly Father and dear reader, I know that it sounds like I am hard on my dad. My feelings were mixed while he was alive. **I had the sense that there was a potential for greatness within him.** When sober, he came off as a cultured human being who had an air of authority. I know that he had a deep belief in God. I never heard him show disrespect for anyone or participate in gossip. He had that fabulous tenor voice and was a choir director of a Presbyterian church in both the city during the war, and then the small town that we moved to after the war.

He was a master at organizing, teaching, and directing choral music. At Christmas time, his choir performed the music of "The Hallelujah Chorus" by Handel. There was always a packed house for all the services. So, there were times when I could feel proud of him.

What stunned my mother, and later me as well, was that providing for the immediate and long-term needs of the family was not important to him. I have no idea if he ever sent money to his first family. Maybe he just left them high and dry like he was going to do to us. On several of his drunken binges he would go missing for several days. I later discovered that on those occasions he went back to see his first wife. Years later, one of the sons by his first marriage told me that on one of those visits Dad asked his first wife to take him back, but she refused. So, I had to come to grips with the fact that he was willing to leave Mother and me.

There was no will because he had no assets. When mother asked how we were going to pay for his burial, he told her to just dump his body in the ocean. Of course, we weren't going to do that. It seemed bleak, but this was the reality within which we existed.

I don't ever remember Dad telling me that he loved me, but he did sell his rusted out 1941 Desoto as scrap to make a down payment on a used 1950 Desoto that he let me drive after I got my license. I suppose that he did that for me. Why that conclusion? Because he seldom used it. At least that was something that I could hang my hat on.

He wished me luck when he and Mother dropped me off at the Marine recruitment terminal. Does that sound cold? No, it probably wasn't a big deal to him because he had been through worse. His two oldest sons from the first marriage saw combat in the war in the Pacific.

Heavenly Father, my dad and Fate (perhaps bolstered by you) made a big move in my life. When Dad realized that his days were numbered, he wrote his congressman a letter about his deteriorating health and, since I was the only child, requested my discharge from the Marine Corps Reserve so that I could look after the family. **That probably saved my life because I would have been called back for the Vietnam conflict.**

Soon, Fate would move once again. Two of my high school friends had gone to Atlanta. One of them was about to be drafted. He recommended me to his boss as his replacement. That is how the job interview in Atlanta materialized.

Thinking back, since I was going to be handling money, I'm sure there must have been a background check. **The mill boss could have ruined me for life** had he told my prospective employer what I had done. I do suspect that for some reason you protected me, Heavenly Father, and I am eternally grateful. My guess is that you decided to teach me an important life lesson before it became a permanent, or even bigger problem.

When I first moved to Atlanta, things were tight, so a friend and I shared a bedroom in a rooming house. We ate our meals out at a diner a few blocks away. I had no savings, so I realized that to pay for things like suits for my new job and car insurance I had better build some credit. During this period, Dad wrote me one of the few letters that I ever received from him. He asked if I had received a raise yet, (No) and then he asked for a sum of money that I just didn't have. **That request, Heavenly Father, and the inability to respond to it has haunted me for the rest of my life.**

I rushed home from Atlanta when Mother called to tell me that Dad was dying. When I went into the bedroom to see him, he was in a delirious state and mistook me for his oldest son from his first marriage. **I was hurt by that, but I suppose that his oldest son was who he was really longing to see.**

I don't know the extent of the drinking problem from his earlier life, but I suspect that he already had a problem which was acerbated by the disappointment with the relationship with the beautiful new lady (my mother) that he had married. That, no doubt, heaped fuel on the fire. So, **I have come to grips with all of that. Life is tough. I have forgiven him,** Heavenly Father, and try now to focus on his good traits and the life lessons that I learned from him. Today, I think of him fondly and look forward to seeing him in the realm that we occupy between earth lives.

I haven't written much about my mother, but the influence that she had on my life is immeasurable. I look like her, and when I was a little tyke, she used to tease that when boys looked like their mom, that was a sign of good luck. But our luck while living with my alcoholic father was not that great. I guess that her luck was good when she was young, but she didn't tell me anything about her youth. What I do know, I discovered from looking at old photo albums or talking to relatives.

It was a terribly sad existence for her. She is the closest thing to a “saint” that I have ever known. I mentioned earlier that we lived in my grandparents’ house which had been left, collectively, to their five children as a refuge in case they ever fell on hard times. Incredibly, they all did. At one time or another, all five families had to use it. While we were there, we shared it with one of my mother’s brothers and his wife. The one plus for Mother is that she could attend daily Mass at the church which was on the same block. Our life was a complete reversal of fortune for Mother who had grown up in a well-to-do family, We were so poor that she couldn’t even afford a bathrobe. One time I heard her say to herself, “I have made my bed, and now I must lie in it.”

As mentioned, when Dad died, I took Mother to Atlanta to live with me. There was a small grocery store in the next block. She could stretch $20.00 worth of groceries further than anyone I have ever known. I had a record player in the apartment which she would sometimes play and then dance, as if there was an invisible partner. I could almost sense a bit of gaiety in her movements. Taking her to some of Atlanta's good restaurants also made her happy. Witnessing her beautiful smile and the lilt of her laugh helped me to glimpse what she must have been like in her younger days.

Returning to the story of how I knew I should marry my wife: It was an inner knowing that I didn’t understand at the time, but It turns out that it was karmic. In a past life, I was a woman. My brother, a powerful ruler, forced me to marry an older man, also a ruler, with the idea of being able to consolidate their powers, if needed, during a time of constant warfare. The older ruler was kind and gentle, but I, as the young wife, was completely turned off, because I was very much in love with a young man. The marriage only lasted a few years before the ruler died. After enough time had passed that the kingdom knew that I was not carrying his heir, I was allowed to leave and rejoin my lover.

By asking a host of questions of my Guardian Angel and a Spirit Guide, **I learned that the spirit of the deceased older ruler had reincarnated into the body of the lovely blond girl that I saw at church.** To further add to the complexity of the hard-to-believe, my mother in this life had been my brother in that earlier life who was the ruler who had forced me to marry the older ruler, so my mother’s spirit had something to do with arranging both marriages. What is

the karmic lesson here? It's simple, in that previous life, I had not committed to the marriage to the older ruler and didn't try to make it work. The husband had tried, so there was some unfinished business between the two of us. Ironically, the husband worked the hardest in that marriage, and I have worked the hardest in the current marriage.

Now, to the question of whether there is someone meant for you. Yes, with many conditions. The ideal someone is your twin soul, commonly called your soul mate, the one who split off from the androgynous being and went their own way to search for perfection. However, it is very rare that earthly marriage between the two of you is a part of the Spiritual Hierarchy's plan because the state of bliss would be so pronounced that you wouldn't learn much from the life experience. In rare cases where you might be allowed to be together, there is usually a big flaw that is grafted onto one or both, so that it is not blissful. Think about the story of Adam and Eve, The Bible's first depiction of soulmates.

From what I learned from my Guardian Angel, there can be souls who "stand very close" to your soulmate, which was her way of saying that those people are very similar to your soulmate. But for most of our existence as a race, marriages were arranged. A good many of those worked out and the race was propagated. The "idea" of romance didn't gain much traction until around 1200 AD.

The lesson for the reader: take a close look at the people around you, those that influence your life in some way. Sometimes they may have been friends or family in previous lifetimes and are there to help you, other times they may have been enemies, or perhaps they are there because of unresolved problems from a prior lifetime, like those described above.

Getting back to my story, upon my marriage in this life, and with my mother relocating to Virginia to reside with her widowed first cousin, I saw to it that Mother received a monthly financial contribution from me. I also secretly sent additional sums to the cousin that she was living with (mother had some pride left, so the cousin suggested that arrangement). **To my wife's great credit, she never complained about the strain that my financial commitment to my mother put on the family's finances.**

The cousin had seven children. All but one of them lived nearby. They and their spouses would visit practically every Sunday heaping love, praise, and gifts on their mom (of course,

none of them had to help support their mother). After witnessing all that love and attention over the course of the years and only hearing from me once or twice a month, **Mother decided that I must not love her. She accused me of that while on an extended visit to our house. That cut to the quick. Heavenly Father, I hope that she now understands.**

Mother was back in Virginia when the end came. I drove up to see her in the hospital. She sat up in bed with pillows, and ever trying to be beautiful, she or a nurse had tried to comb her hair. She smiled at me with such love and affection that it melted my heart. She tried to tell me something, but her voice was so weak that I couldn't understand her. She passed during the night, so I will never know what she wanted to say. **What I do know, Heavenly Father, is that I was a disappointment to her; I ask your and her forgiveness.**

Disappointment is an integral part of most people's life. My mother was disappointed in herself, my father, and me; that is a lot disappointment for one person.

So, dear reader, why have I told this story? Hopefully, the background presented below will help you understand. I will go back over some of it. I have already mentioned that **in a previous life my mother was a king of a country, who developed the reputation of a tyrant. My father in this life had been a trusted advisor to that tyrannical king. I was the king's sister (with a secret lover). The king arranged my marriage to another older ruler (the man that I was forced to marry has now reincarnated as my wife in this life.) When that older-ruler-husband in the past life died, I rejoined my lover, which infuriated my brother the king. On my behalf, his trusted advisor (my father in this life), who by the way, had a tyrannical relationship with my mother in this life** (karma) **tried to help smooth things over. Eventually, it worked, and my brother allowed me to marry my lover. Somewhere along the way however, the advisor made a mistake in his advice to the king, and it infuriated the king so much that the king had him put to death.**

My understanding of the law of Karma as it relates to my parents and myself is that all three of us had endured problematic relationships with each other. My father in this life must have been subconsciously affected by the past karmic relationship with my mother, stemming from the fact that she ended his promising life during the time that she was king. This could possibly explain the constant arguing and his lack of financial responsibility in this life. My

Mother, who was king in the previous life, had control over everyone. In this life, she had absolutely no control over anything. Do you see the karmic lessons? In this life, my wife and mother did not have a very good relationship even though my mother was very instrumental in our meeting each other. My mother could sense that my wife only tolerated her because of me. (Karma there too)?

I now suspect that the relationship with my father in this life was influenced by an even earlier life together about which the guide has not yet been willing to share information.

Somewhere along the way, perhaps hundreds or even thousands of years ago, I must have screwed up badly as a mate and parent. Heavenly Father, I hope that whoever my mate and children were in that life will forgive me. Along with that, I realize that the karma that I am facing in this life is heavy, and I suspect that there is much more with which I must deal.

Mine is just one example of a myriad of negative things that can influence the people that play a role in your life. They are put there for important spiritual reasons. But remember that the world is the devil's playground, and he and his followers have an arsenal of dirty tricks up their sleeves. One of their goals is to discourage us and cause us to feel unloved, and that we are being picked on or discriminated against. The other goal is to fully ensconce our minds with the glitter and appeal of the ego satisfaction of worldly goals.

Chapter 5

Searching for Worth

The Masters write that what you are today is a pretty good indication of what you have been century after century. That statement lands heavily on me because I am trying to improve but am very aware of my many faults and mistakes in this life. I have also had some small insights into past lives in which the karma of those lives hangs heavily.

Perhaps the reader will understand how my mother's sense of shame about her betrayal of church rules with the marriage to a divorced man, and the lack of any sense of family unity caused by my father's alcoholism rubbed off on me as a child. The feeling that we were not as good as everyone else had been firmly implanted on my conscious and subconscious minds by my mother. Add to that mental and emotional cocktail the overriding message that I had to repeat every Sunday once I became old enough to receive Holy Communion and that was: "Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof, but only say the word, and my soul will be healed." There was that thought again, "Not worthy".

I wonder how many other people feel unworthy. That feeling can be a part of the puzzling confusion of Christianity. For instance, I had a tennis friend whom I discovered was also on a spiritual search. He had been raised in the Baptist faith and had experienced the mental berating of several different "Fire and Brimstone" type preachers. He told me that one of them said that if you had committed a certain type of sin, you were going to hell. Another told him that if you had committed another certain type of sin, you were going to hell. Another told him that if you had committed yet another type of sin, you were going to hell. Then my friend told me, "Guess what? I've committed them all. I don't stand a chance."

If you had experienced meeting this man, as I did, you would have thought him to be a good man, but like me, he had sinned and felt unworthy. He was hard on himself, but I suspect that Jesus would be thrilled to have him in his flock. So, in certain pastor's zeal to make us aware of our sins, have some of them gone too far? Has the emphasis been placed too heavily on the shame of our weaknesses and not enough on teaching us about God's forgiveness? Should they instead teach us how to recognize potential human pitfalls with the goal to make

ourselves stronger so that we can resist temptation? This man was on a spiritual search for God understanding, but you've got to ask yourself an important question: who put those spiritual ideas in his mind in the first place? Doesn't it seem probable that God was searching for him first, and is the one who gave him the spiritual thoughts?

In one of the early books of the Bible, the Book of Wisdom, the idea of the primacy of grace is expounded. Amongst those gifts of grace are mercy, compassion, and forgiveness. Some of us have a harder time than others believing that our sins can be forgiven. Particularly when one thinks of Jesus' statement "Be ye perfect, even as your father in heaven is perfect." That is certainly the ideal. On the other hand, **Jesus was one of the biggest proponents of divine mercy and forgiveness, but the Church's persistent message that we are unworthy causes some of us to be confused.** If you live on the earth amongst its' people and have been exposed to the secular culture trends that are so prominent in our culture, it would be hard not to have sinned. **Have you ever heard a sermon based on what one can do to prevent the most common pitfalls of everyday life?** If you haven't yet been exposed to those pitfalls, you at least know about them because they are spelled out graphically on social media.

One shocking bit of information: the average child spends about 7 ½ hours a day on social media. Can you believe that? I didn't until I was in a department store and noticed a child of about 6 years of age sitting on the bottom rail of her mother's shopping cart, glued to a phone while her mother was looking at clothing. Kids used to go out and play or interact with their friends. You don't see much of that anymore. Thankfully, there does appear to be the beginning of concern by some parents, and maybe a light sprinkling of politicians about the effect that social media is having on our children.

Another misstep is the fact that none of the Christian religions do a good enough job of dealing with the fear of death. There is the thought pushed by Christian Churches that is based on the one-lifetime-chance to get it right or wrong, with the result being that you either go to heaven or hell. How scary is that? Certain religions propose the concept of purgatory, which can be thought of as an intermediate state "a halfway house"?

I'm sure that some pastor will remind me that one of the purposes of a lifetime of church attendance is that one should learn all the lessons by osmosis. But one of the big

problems with that is that church attendance is way down and media attention to the fulfillment of bodily desires is way up.

Everything good originally emanated from God. But the world today is overwhelmed with evil. Our country, (the U.S.) which was founded on the principle of religious freedom, and in its Pledge of Allegiance has the words," One nation under God" has now been turned into one where the people in control of our schools don't want anyone to talk about religion with our youth, except possibly at home. So, instead of building on the idea of reverence for God, the people in charge are giving preference to the ideas of atheists and those that are teaching gender confusion. Even though I used to think that we were a nation devoted to God, I don't recognize that in this country anymore.

Getting back to my story, when I look back over my life, I am astonished at the many obstacles that presented themselves. I do understand that a lot of people have had lives that are much worse. I feel for them, but in this book, I'm dealing with the life that I know and trying to make sense of it as I explain some of my mistakes. At times, I wondered if I was going to make it, but somehow, Heavenly Father, you pulled me through the most important challenges. My Guardian Angel has informed me that I have been greatly helped (grace) I think that she wants to make sure that I fully understand how much I was helped. I suspect that I didn't understand at the time and am still learning. Her emphasis causes me to wonder just how much I may have hurt people in other lifetimes, but I am very aware that I have been helped in this life. In fact, I am in awe of the help. **The Catholic Church and most other Christian Churches refer to that help as "grace".**

My Guardian Angel also chides me because of what she calls my "wry attitude." She states that I have the habit of usually expecting the worst, (an anxiety complex?) even while hoping for and trying to develop a good outcome. I don't disagree with her. Early on, my future seemed rather hopeless. There is a female Archangel, an Archaii, whose name is Hope and whose gift is "hope," who I know has buttressed me throughout my life, but you, Heavenly Father, never let things get so bad that I felt like I was becoming crushed. I think that that realization is a key understanding of which I hope I can convince my readers. **God never gives**

you more trouble than you can bear. Whatever weighty issue he places on your shoulders is designed to make you stronger.

Things got a little better for my wife and I for a few years as we raised our four sons and I was building a career. It was nice to have a bit of a breather, but even then, there were problems with the sons (every family probably has them) with which we had to deal plus a very difficult boss during parts of both of my careers with which I had to try to work around. In old age, my wife and I faced significant health challenges. Fifteen years ago, I was given a death sentence. An Indian lady doctor looked at me very dispassionately and told me that I had multiple myeloma and that there was nothing that could be done for me. I decided not to believe her and to try to block it out of my mind. I don't know how you managed it, Heavenly Father, but I am still here **(grace again)?**

Currently, I am the caregiver for my wife who has many afflictions and can't walk or even stand without the assistance of a walker. So, yes, I am used to things going south and having to deal with disappointments. On the other hand, I suppose it would not be good to think that I am always going to be bailed out but should accept what my guardian Angel continues to stress and that is: that I should learn to trust in God. That means that I should stop the constant worrying, should accept whatever comes, and realize that I don't know God's purpose or plan.

Many people can't understand how a loving God can allow the suffering that is evident in the world. Saint Paul addressed that issue in the Letter to the Romans, "How inscrutable and unsearchable are God's ways." (Romans 11:33) "It is impossible to explain his decisions." So, I thought about this for a while and concluded that God is the intelligence that created the entire universe and everything in it, His infinite mind must consider every person and every eventuality in any situation, (certainly no one else could do that) so we need to have faith that His plan will eventually work out. Life on earth can be thought of as a giant puzzle, and mankind is the one part of the puzzle that isn't fitting together correctly.

In Romans 7, Saint Paul points out a problem that most people don't even realize that they have and that is; the wish to do good, but because of habit, we sometimes do just the opposite. As an example, in my early life, I was absorbed with thoughts about the opposite sex. I would dream of and fantasize about beautiful women. So then began the habit of observing an

attractive woman and automatically sorting through a list of different attributes that she must possess that might qualify her as a potential love interest. Some could say that the process served me well during my earlier years. But here I am in the late December of my years, and I still struggle with the habit. Not that I am "looking" for another mate or would ever act on it, because I have one of the best, but I catch myself gazing at an attractive woman at the grocery store, a restaurant or even at church, and I realize that my mind is processing yet again, sorting through her attributes. (I find myself using the same process on good-looking cars. To be clear, I've been a car guy since I was about fourteen. However, I've never dreamed of driving or owning an SUV.) Of course, these two habits are a waste of the energy that God sends to me in each heartbeat. One of the things that the Masters say that we will be judged on is how we used God's energy. **Now, apply an examination on yourself as to how you use your mind in habits that you didn't even realize that you possess. Particularly to those that might put others at a disadvantage.**

God granted mankind free will. Because of that free will, we most often run off on different tangents. God also gave us rules by which to live. If we had obeyed the rules, there wouldn't be the amount of suffering that besets people. The Law of Karma suggests that we must experience whatever harm or hurt that we have caused others. (But not always in the current lifetime.) Can't you imagine that God is sitting back, observing us, and shaking his head in disbelief as we muddle through all this stuff?

I do believe in the power of prayer. All prayers are good and eventually reach the Heavenly Father. The important thing to consider, however, is that not all the things that you pray for are going to be granted. If the prayers are personal requests or are requests to help a loved one, there are probably circumstances of which you are totally unaware. Perhaps the situation is karmic and is a lesson that you or your loved one must face. Unresolved karma must be faced at some point, so praying to put it off until later, or even another lifetime, might prove to be a big mistake.

In my own case, I realized that I had a subconscious resentment to saying the rosary. (The rosary is a request for Mary, the Mother of Jesus, to pray for us). I thought that it was a waste of time. That was inexorably wrong. After receiving some hints from my Guardian Angel, I

did quite a bit of thinking and finally understood that my problem dated back to a much earlier lifetime in which I had longed for a relationship outcome and prayed over it. The relationship didn't happen. It was wrong, and never meant to be in the first place, but I was disappointed at the time, and it hung around somewhere in my current subconscious.

This broader understanding of karma that I am describing doesn't mean that one should give up on the rosary or, for that matter, any prayers. There have been many thousands of miracles attributed to the help of the Holy Mother with at least 70 documented miracles that have occurred at a shrine in Lourdes, France alone. So, you never know exactly which prayer requests may qualify to be granted. What you must understand is that no prayer is wasted. It will always help you or your loved one in some way.

Getting back to the subject of "Grace". The Catholic Church is convinced that grace is the most important ingredient in our pathway to heaven. It suggests that if Catholics don't pray for and qualify for grace from Lord Jesus Christ, they don't stand a chance of making it to heaven.

That stance, I suspect, comes from the Church's interpretation of Jesus' statement, "I am the way, the truth and the life, No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6). The Church appears to be interpreting the statement literally. Jesus was, in fact, perfect and, in his statement, he was stressing that we must emulate the correct way of dealing with life that he had exhibited to make it to heaven. But, on the other hand, there are examples of his forgiving people of their sins, including where he forgave one of the two criminals hanging next to him on a cross, saying, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

So, I do agree with the Church that "Grace" is one of the powers that supersedes almost everything, even the law of karma. There are other elements to be considered such as whether an individual has done the necessary work to transform themselves. For instance, in the case of holding a grudge against someone who has wronged you. Have you truly meditated and prayed over it to flush it out of your system, or have you just mouthed the words because the Bible said that you should forgive. I am concerned that if you rely too heavily on Jesus to save you, you might not put in as much work as you need to help save yourself.

What about those from other religions that don't recognize Jesus' role but have worked hard to perfect themselves? Even though some people may feel that Christians think that they

have the inside lane on the road to grace, the Church does accept the idea that the non-Christians could qualify for grace by devotion to God, good works and following their conscience. So, good for the Church on that issue.

One thing that I should make clear; It doesn't matter which religion you chose. All of them offer a pathway back to reunion with God.

The Ascended Masters and a significant portion of humanity appear to have a somewhat different stance than the Christian Church on a few things. There are some 4,300 religions currently on the earth. (There have been over 10,000 since the beginning of humanity.) The non-Christians far outnumber the Christians. There does appear to be several big hang-ups between the teachings of the Church and the teachings of the Masters. **The first hang-up is the subject of reincarnation. The Church teaches that we have only one lifetime,** but that there are two deaths. The first death is called the Particular judgement in which the soul is judged based on its life's relationship with God leading to the soul going immediately to heaven, purgatory, or hell. The Last judgement is at the end of time, where the soul and body are reunited, a judgement made, with the righteous soul/body inheriting the new creation (a new heaven and a new earth?) while the wicked soul/body will face eternal condemnation. **It's my understanding that the Church teaches that the corpse has no consciousness until the "Judgement Day,"** when our fate for the rest of eternity will be decided. But if we only have one life, doesn't the Church's teaching that there are two judgements seem like double indemnity?

The Catholic Church teaches that all souls are equal in dignity and have equal inherent value but that each soul is unique and that differences in talents and abilities are spread around with the hope that the entities will help each other.

So, someone please explain: if we only get one chance, but we're all supposedly created inherently equal, how do we account for the inequality and injustice of that equation? Some people sure seem to have an easier path than others. And where are those that have the "talents and abilities" when you need them?

The Masters teach that we can have many lifetimes and, based on their teaching, it seems reasonable that it could take a number of different kinds of experiences to form a well-rounded soul.

To confute the Church's stance on the one life-chance and the loss of body consciousness until Judgement Day, there have been a significant number of recent accounts of people dying, experiencing a taste of the Spirit World, and then coming back to life (NDE's). Their stories (many of which are now available on YouTube) are similar in that **they say that spiritual existence goes on after death** (or at least, in their case, near-death) and that they experienced an incredible feeling of love in the spirit world. In fact, some say that they felt that they were at "home" and felt more alive in the short time that they spent in the spirit world than while in their bodies. Most talked about the incredible beauty of the nature scenes. There were accounts of seeing other people who were in that same dimension and that there was the sense that we are all one big spiritual family. Many say that they were able to experience a review of the life that they had been living and saw how they had impacted those people around them. They all said that they were told that they weren't finished with this life and had to come back. Some say that they enjoyed that dimension so much that they didn't really want to come back.

There are also a considerable number of books by doctors and others in the medical profession that indicate that, based on their experiences, reincarnation is real and that we can have multiple lifetimes. Among the best known and well documented are "Journey of Souls" and "Destiny of Souls" by Michael Newton, PH.D. where people, under hypnosis, describe some of those past lifetimes and conversations with their spirit guides about what they are supposed to learn. (See Book 1 for more on these subjects.)

As for reincarnation in the Bible, Jesus appears to be teasing at bringing up his own previous incarnations by asking, "Who do people say that I am?" Matthew 16:13-16, Mark 8: 27-29, and Luke 9: 18-20.

As for Jesus' direct input on reincarnation: Bible quote (Matthew 11:13-15,) Jesus is talking about John the Baptist. "For before John came, all the teachings of the scriptures looked forward to this present time. And if you are willing to accept what I say, he is Elijah, the one the prophets said would come. Anyone who is willing to hear should listen and understand."

As further evidence, at the transfiguration, Peter, James, and John are confused because, based on their prior religious training, they thought that Elijah must return before the Messiah

comes. Jesus replies "To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything that they wished. In the same way, the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist. {Matthew 17:11-13).

The point is, if you interpret the Bible literally, it indicates that Elijah reincarnated as John the Baptist. (I know, we're going to get all types of interpretations and protests). It seems that the Church wants us to take some Biblical teachings literally and yet some others that don't fit their narrative, with different interpretations. Only God knows whether the Bible is to be interpreted literally sometimes and allegorically sometimes, but it seems that Jesus' statements about Elijah returning as John the Baptist were very clear.

In the dictation that was reportedly given by Lord Jesus and then published by the Ascended Master El Morya in the last century, Jesus is quoted as saying, **"One of the greatest mistakes, which has 'bogged down' the activity of the Christian Dispensation, is the placing of Godhood upon myself ALONE, and denying it to my fellowman. Christhood is POSSIBLE FOR EVERYONE, besides my humble self. Before I was born into my final embodiment, there were many life streams who had achieved the state of Christhood."**

(21 ESSENTIAL LESSONS, THE SIXTH RAY, Lesson 15.) Available from Ascended Master Teaching Foundation, P. O. Box 466, Mount Shasta, CA 96067.

(An independent search will reveal the names of some of Jesus' previous incarnations.)

In a document titled "The Will of God" by Thomas Printz, (The pen name of Master El Morya,) he states that **the first "Christ" to visit the earth came from the Great Central Sun about a million years ago.** (A period when an extensive effort was being made to rescue humanity from the disastrous effects of the ape man/caveman period,) and also the time of the introduction of the 5th Root Race. He came from the Central Sun because there were no Ascended Christ beings from the earth's evolutions at that time. His name was Krishna. (There were several beings named Krishna.) It is said that he remained on the earth for over 600 years.

It is reported that there were other “Christ-type” beings that visited the earth over the span of the last million years.

I understand that the idea that there have been other “Christs” may be upsetting. For some reason, we seem to think that we are unique in that we are the only planet in the universe that is inhabited by spiritual beings. I ask you to think of the age of the earth versus the age of the universe. We are youngsters compared to other galaxies. Why would you want to limit God? He is capable of loving and nurturing other spiritual beings to perfection as well as us. According to the Masters, there are other planets that are inhabited. Some of those beings are in spirit forms that are invisible to our sight. Others may be in bodies that have a different form than ours.

Another big hangup revolves around the interpretation of the source of grace. The Catholic Church teaches that grace is a gift from God, made possible through Jesus and distributed through the Holy Spirit.

Of course, the author agrees that all grace originally emanates from God. It is a part of God’s plan for humanity, but perhaps it could come from several sources. The first direct source of grace could be from God, himself, for the reward of the “good” that one has accumulated in past lives. How else could one explain why some people seem to have more “gifts” or talents than others? Another source could be the grace that was offered to all of humanity through the sacrifice given by Lord Jesus’ crucifixion for the world’s sins. Yet another could be from the Holy Spirit, with the best Biblical example being that of the Holy Spirit descending on the Apostles and some of the lay people to strengthen their ability to teach and perform miracles during the spreading of the gospel in the beginning years of Christianity.

But there was a huge miracle in the Twentieth Century in which the Holy Spirit was most probably involved. It was the incident in which Pope John Paul II played a crucial role in bringing about the freedom of the Polish people, along with the collapse of communism in that part of Europe. Don’t you suspect that the Holy Spirit was involved in that?

Another source of grace would be the healing grace offered by Mary, the mother of Jesus and her twin flame, Archangel Raphael who is the Archangel that works on the healing Ray. (Hail Mary, full of grace.) The Ascended Masters state that they can offer grace to certain of

their chelas (students) that they have worked with over the centuries with the understanding that if the chela doesn't use the grace wisely, the Master must make up for it by some extra service to God.

The Masters teach that the goal for each of us at some point in our incarnational cycle is to achieve the remembrance of our own divinity. With that in mind, they also teach that we, like Jesus, are children of the Most High God, and that we need to do the work necessary to become a "Christ."

The biggest disappointment that I find with Christianity is their lack of focus on two key things that stand out in the readings of John, (who was Jesus' favorite disciple,) that tie into the Master's teaching. The first is a reference to a statement in the Old Testament where Jesus reminded the Jews (who were always testing him, looking for a mistake on his part). **"Is it not written in your law, 'I said you are Gods.'** (Here Jesus was referring to Psalm 81-6, where the Prophet Asaph was communicating to unjust judges. Jesus' own comment on this passage is, "he called them gods to whom the word of God was addressed." Probably trying to point out the smallness of the Jew's thinking; Jesus continues, "do you say of him whom the Father has made holy and sent into the world 'Thou blasphemest,' because I said I am the Son of God?" At that point, Jesus had to quickly change the focus and disappear, because the Jews were getting ready to stone him and Jesus knew that it was not the right time for him to die. (This abrupt change probably left the biblical scholars hanging).

The important part of the text of Psalm 81-6 & 7 reads, "I said, You are gods, sons of the Most High; Yet, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince." **One could interpret this to mean that as sons of God, these beings had the potential to rise above their earthly constraints and achieve their divine nature, but instead they continued to function in their human essence.** Note; I did not find this explanation in the Master's writings, so this is my own thought. It may well be included in the many thousands of pages of dictations from the Masters, but I wasn't looking for it at the time, and don't remember seeing it.

The second key thing that has not been stressed is one of the most important things that Jesus said during his ministry, and that was, **"He who believes in me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to the Father." (John 14: 12.).**

Jesus was saying that if we believe in his teachings and train ourselves to emulate him, that we could also gain the grace from the Holy Spirit to perform miracles. According to the Acts of the Apostles, the Apostles and many of the lay people were blessed by the Holy Spirit and were able to perform miracles. Taking the next step, if we become trained enough and trusted enough to perform miracles, doesn't it seem reasonable to assume that we have taken a giant step in spiritual understanding and have the potential to also become Christ-like?

Have you ever heard the current Christian Church say that performing "works" in the manner of Christ is something to be sought after? I haven't. Unfortunately, my take on the understanding that I have gleaned in listening to the church for all these years is that Jesus is in such an exalted position that I wouldn't know how to relate to him. My take is not so unusual. In the last chapter, you will find a statement by Jesus, given to a nun, expressing his concern that people are not coming to him for mercy.

After thinking about this for a while, do you perhaps feel cheated that you haven't been exposed to this part of Christ's teaching? What if, from the age of adolescence, you had been taught that one of your main goals in life was to learn how to train yourselves and transform yourselves to tap into the divine ability to perform miracles? Wouldn't it then seem that your further goal would be to become a Christ? If these things had been taught, don't you think that you might have lived your life differently?

So, there are some differences between the Master's teaching and the Church's teaching, some of which, like the one just mentioned are huge, but who is to say that the Church is the ultimate authority on everything? **Based on the Church's current stance on grace, and their teaching that we only have one chance at life, their formula throws the accumulated good that a spirit might have accrued over many lifetimes out the window.**

So, the debate goes on about interpretations of spiritual truth. There is much to love about the Catholic Church and Christianity in general. It is a beautiful religion and the teachings on the Omnipotent and merciful God, most of the work on the mission of Lord Jesus, the power of The Holy Spirit and the service of the Angelic evolution are all pretty much correct, but other questions remain. After Jesus and his disciples left the earth, the interpretations of spiritual truth were made by people who had opinions, like you and me. For instance, Origen, who was

considered one of the giants of the early church, was among the first to recognize that there appeared to be two creation stories in the Bible. The first was where **God appeared to create the spirits** (now known as humanity) **according to divine image.** The second was where **God appeared to create flesh bodies made of the elements of the earth.**

Origen taught the pre-existence of the soul that could inhabit flesh bodies. Three hundred years later, in a reorganization of church teaching, Origen was declared persona non-grata. **The Master's teaching about humanity's beginnings, which is considered by them to be an updated version of Genesis** together with the reason for the coming of reincarnation would indicate that Origen's ideas were in line with the Masters.

If you have read my other books, you will have learned that, **according to the Masters, Jesus was who he said that he was.** What makes Christianity different than the other big religions? Two things, the first: **God became human so that we could learn how to become God.** The second: **The Resurrection of Jesus proved that God's love is more powerful than anything, even death.**

Some incredible things happened in Jesus' life, and they were very well documented. If you have read these books, you will know that the Masters promote the faith in Jesus Christ. You will also have learned that the Masters teach that Christhood is the ultimate goal of every soul. Again, **Jesus said, "Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father.** (John 14:12). Let that sink in. What does the Church teach? That Jesus was the only Son of God and that he came to save us from our sins. So, what does that make us? Sinners, yes. But are we not also sons and daughters of God? In my opinion the Church's stance creates a barrier.

So, you must decide for yourself if it is worth the effort to try to become more like Jesus. If you come to that conclusion, then how can that be achieved? **The first step, and it is a "huge" step: You have to believe that following in the footsteps of Jesus is possible.** I address this to myself, as well as the reader. The church hasn't taught us that but has unconsciously promulgated the idea of Jesus as a being so far above us that most of us can't bring ourselves to call on him for mercy and instruction.

The second step; making the decision to be fully dedicated to becoming One with the Will of God. That means that God comes first in every decision. Everything must be filtered through the rubric of what would God want of you in any situation. **The third step;** and this may seem even more difficult: **To begin to try to emulate the perfection exhibited in the life of Jesus**. I know, it seems almost impossible. Right? And that's our big problem. If we think that it is impossible, it will be.

Do you really want to keep spinning your wheels until the big wheel of time runs out? Master St. Germain suggested that this is probably the last 2,000-year period before this experiment on the earth is over.

Who was God's perfect pattern on the earth? There were several who could qualify as candidates, but **the one who received the most documentation was Lord Jesus.** He had a very public ministry, with much teaching in the proper way that we should relate to our fellow brothers and sisters, together with a long list of miracles during his short ministry. **The overwhelming evidence though was his resurrection from the dead and his later ascension to heaven, which was witnessed by many people.**

Arguments could be made for the original Lord Krishna, (the Hindu teachings seem to be very close to the truth, although because of their age, some sources state that there might be some contradictory documentation reference Lord Krishna). Also, some scholars seem to have an impression that the Hindu followers were too "fascinated" with the many layers of God's helpers, thereby losing sight of the proper love and respect for God.

Arguments could also be made for the Buddha and his doctrine of the "Middle Way" and his ultimate victory of enlightenment. The Masters are very much appreciative of the Buddha and the "Middle Way." However, there is not as much documentation of his enlightenment, plus his achievement was made mostly in private, through the use of meditation over a long period. Even though the Buddha had many followers, it has been reported by the Masters, that he spoke personally to only a very few, and so the histories of the Buddha and Lord Krishna are a bit different and perhaps, a little fuzzy.

Arguments could also be made for Moses; a truly remarkable leader who had a very special relationship with God and who also performed miracles. Moses was the being who

received the “Law” from God, The Ten Commandments, and was responsible for most of the first five books of the Old Testament. Moses was frustrated by the Jewish people who had been in Egypt for so long that they had forgotten their religious heritage.

To help us realize that Moses didn’t consider himself to be the “perfect pattern,” at one point, Moses prophesized, “The Lord your God will raise up a prophet like me.” (Deuteronomy 18:15.) Some think that he was referring to the future coming of Jesus. Remember also, that Moses was chastised by God near the end of his life for doubting, plus God was disappointed in Moses for losing patience with God’s chosen people, and he was not allowed to enter the promised land, so Moses, although great, took himself out of the running.

So, we come back to our original statement that Jesus is the perfect pattern.

The Masters indicated that prior to the last century, most of the Ascensions had come from the Eastern Religions, so that seems to back up the idea that you don’t have to be a Christian to receive grace.

There are Ascended Masters who are serving or have served in the Spiritual Hierarchy of the earth that have experienced lifetimes in which they have been Hindu, Jewish, Buddhists, Christians, Islamists or even an undocumented Chinese religion at one time or another in their many different lifetimes.

Whatever your religion, I urge you to think through all of this, then to make the decision to repent and follow the Will of God. It is up to you; no one is going to do it for you. **Decide now to become one with God’s Will.** You will never regret it.

It may take some time for the next idea to sink in, but you will also realize that you are being led to become one with the Christ Spirit. The Father and the Son are One in Spirit and as a Son of God, you will find yourself questioning everything that you do; the way that you think, the way that you react to other people, the way that you study and the way that you learn. You will find yourself contemplating your new insights and the more that you question your motives, the louder the inner voice of the Conscience will become. That is part of God’s plan for you.

Chapter 6

The Will of God

To achieve perfection in this life which leads to the ultimate goal, that of becoming a Christ Being, and with that, an Ascender Master, we must first become one with the Will of God. So, what are the components of that will? According to the Ascended Master, El Morya, the Chohan of the 1st Ray, which is the Ray of Strength, Power, Protection and the Will of God: **"The Will of God is Good, The Will of God is Light, The Will of God is Happiness, The Will of God is Peace, The Will of God is Purity, The Will of God is Balance, The Will of God is Kindness."**

God, however, gave mankind free will. Isn't that kind of confusing? Doesn't it seem that the two wills are going to be at odds from time to time? Of course! That's all part of the puzzle of earth life, and we did it to ourselves. There are the Purity and Perfection of God's Will (it doesn't get any better). Then, there's that second will, the one of our earthly minds, which is based on satisfying all bodily desires, plus the pursuit of earthly goals that we are told will make us happy (another one of the devil's lies.).

Someone has to tell you this, it didn't originate with me, but I will tell you anyway. **What you and your soul are hungering for is never going to be found in the material things of this earth.** I had to learn this the hard way. The devil had a firm grip on my will in the early years, for my will was perverse and filled with lust. He still torments me to this day. Satan knows how to sift us like flour and the more that we try to purify yourselves, the more temptations he will throw our way.

The impulses of nature and the impulses of the spirit are usually going to be at war with each other, particularly when we are young and inexperienced. It's sort of amusing sometimes, how song writers pick up on the fickleness with which we address important life lessons. For instance, there's a song that's titled, "Blame It On My Youth". There's another titled, "Don't Wait Too Long". Perhaps you can see in the stories of my youth how I most certainly relate to the first song. As for the second song, I remind you that based on the Master's teaching, many of us have gone through multiple lifetimes stretching back over a million or more years. That makes it readily apparent that our soul group has already waited too long.

What is wrong with us? Why do we keep coming back to earth for more of the same? Are we sadists? The only thing that keeps us from going nuts is **"the gift of forgetfulness." This gift was given by the Spiritual Hierarchy to prevent our consciousness from knowing the details of previous lives, the gravity of which would be too much to bear.**

What are the things that are blocking our union with the Will of God? The most publicized are "The Seven Deadly Sins": pride, envy, gluttony, greed, lust, sloth, and wrath. Beyond that, the most obvious is the issue of "Love". It is said that the word" God" is synonymous with the word "Love" because everything that God thought and created was out of love for His creation. Everything good comes to us by gift. **Do you love God for who He is, or do you love God for the gifts that you have received?**

What was the Master, Jesus' last admonition to his Apostles before his death? "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 13:34). All of the great spiritual teachers have emphasized love. What is the definition of love? There are several fairly long definitions but it is all summed up in a short one by St. Thomas Aquinas. And that is: "**To will the good of the other."** So, that means that everyone with whom you interact must be treated as if they were as special as God, and you should want what is best for them. Can any of us really say that about ourselves? In the give and take of life we are mostly about what is best for "me."

Another obstacle is our preclusion to judge others' thoughts, words, and actions. Lord Jesus said, **"Judge not, lest you be judged."** (Matthew 7:1-5.). We are quick to condemn others' mistakes but are quite willing to sweep our own misdeeds under the rug. Jesus was very critical of mankind's hypocrisy. Hypocrisy appears to be one of the devil's tricks that has become a leading human trait. For instance, an acquaintance might say to you, "I condemn the affair that George and Linda are having but, of course, my affair is different."

"How so? What makes it different?" You may ask.

"Because I love her." He answers.

"Is it because you <u>think</u> that you are in love?" You may counter.

The acquaintance responds, "Well, love is good, right?"

"Yes, but what happened to the love for your spouse?" You ask.

"Yeah, it used to be good, but you know, something happened. God knows what I did to set her off?" The acquaintance answers.

"You don't know? Did you ever try to fix it?" You ask.

You receive nothing but a blank stare as the acquaintance is lost in dredging up the unpleasant memories.

God knows your every thought. Thoughts about relationships are tangled up with emotions. Good thoughts and hurtful thoughts are always competing for your attention. If you go with the easy or convenient one, the shame will come over you at some point in time. If you are responsible for a bad outcome for others, you will someday have to face the karma.

Spiritual teachers will tell you that pride (listed as the first of the 7 deadly sins) is one of the greatest sins against God's Will. It is easy to become impressed with one's own accomplishments, but how could you have achieved those things without the "gifts" that were handed out to you before birth? Whether it be mental acuity, personality traits, good looks, a pleasant voice, extraordinary strength, unusual stamina, a kind heart, or a warm smile, you either earned these "gifts" in a previous lifetime or they are on "loan" to you to see how you use them. If you overplay your hand, you could come back in the next life without any of those "gifts." Humility is absolutely necessary. It could also be considered a "gift," but for most of us, including myself, it must be learned.

Envy is listed as the second deadly sin. Perhaps it is the easiest of the seven to commit, because we are always looking at each other "sideways" which is a colloquial way of saying that we are comparing ourselves to others. Don't make the mistake of feeling bad or good about the comparisons. There will always be those that you notice who are greater or lesser than you. What you don't know is where they are on the spiritual path and what their challenges may be.

Greed is right up there with pride as a sin against God's Will. What causes greed? At some point in one's existence, there was a feeling of lack. To combat the feeling of lack, we often desire more than we can use. How much is enough? In thinking about your own greed, do you understand that it stems from how little that you trust in God? Gluttony Is similar to greed; one can't get enough of something.

Greed can sometimes get tangled up with the lust for power. The history of the world is replete with stories of people who either wanted to expand their own power or their government's power over other people or nations. It's hard to find an example that has withstood the test of time. Just think of the millions of people who have died because of someone's lust for power. Senseless? Godless? Amen and Amen.

The deadly sin of lust can take many forms. We've already addressed the lust for power. Now, we will discuss the most common lust, the lust for sex. I confessed some of my own sins in this regard as an undisciplined and out-of-control person who made many mistakes. None of my pre-marital relationships are worth remembering other than the one with the high school girl with whom I was in love. Think about yours. Try to remember those one-night stands. Did you keep count perhaps, for the sport of it like I once did, only to become disgusted with myself, or is disappointment the overlying memory? Love is the ingredient that makes sexual activity satisfying and fulfilling. The rest can be flushed down the toilet. Don't get me wrong, sex is an important function for the human race. Without it, the race would disappear. Just understand that casual sex without love is a weight on the soul that you will regret. I did and still do.

Sloth is considered one of the seven deadly sins because it displays apathy as it relates to a lack of love, respect for yourself, and others in the manner in which you present yourself.

Wrath is one of the seven deadly sins. Wrath is all bottled up in hatred of another or of a group. Sometimes, the cause of group hatred goes back many centuries and has been passed down from generation to generation. There are probably those who hate that are unaware of what caused the initial hatred many centuries ago. The Masters' teaching on this is very clear. **Anyone who harbors hatred for another cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven.** Think long and hard about that.

"The Will of God is Light" relates to the overriding purpose of life on earth that became the goal after mankind fell prey to the dark force in its' first venture of experimenting with the gift of free will. The "Light" represents the goodness and love of God's ways. The "dark" represents the utter chaos of the devil's ways.

Purity is one of the main goals in becoming One with the Will of God. How many of us can say that purity of mind and emotions is the principle within which we gauge our thoughts

and actions? I have been trying for several years to purify myself, but I keep finding my mind slipping back into old habits. I've done better on some, but on others, it seems embarrassingly futile. However, I know that I can't give up. All things come in their time. The Great Elohim beings, Claire and Astrea, specialize in helping purify the electrons within the atoms in every cell. They will help you, but it is not automatic. They must be invited to help.

In thinking about "Peace" as a part of the Will of God, I suspect that in my own case, seeking peace is what motivated me to begin my search for God. I certainly didn't know peace in my early life, and I've told you that my Guardian Angel chides me for always expecting the worst. It was part of my early DNA and became habitual, but I also know that I have been greatly helped and am just beginning to understand that it shouldn't really matter about what happens in this life. What matters is my trust in God that everything that does happen is what's best for my soul. So, I am trying to learn to be at peace with that.

Happiness is a part of the Will of God. Happiness is usually wrapped around a lot of factors: having enough of life's necessities, how you feel about your personal relationships, how you feel about your career, how you feel about yourself and how you feel about your relationship with God. If you get those things right, the rest of the stuff will be pretty easy.

"The Will of God is Good" and "The Will of God is Kindness" can be summed up under the broad general category of love. If one truly loves his fellow brothers and sisters, one's every interaction with others will be good and kind, and that's what really matters. Most of the trouble in the world emanates from disagreements between people.

"The Will of God is Balance" is a reminder that we should put everything in perspective. Too much or too little of anything can throw us off kilter.

Despite the picture of the "troubled" human that I have painted about myself, there is a "gift" that I received that has helped me immensely. The gift is: there is a tune playing in my mind most of the time. The tunes are usually classic love songs from the last century or church hymns or parts of symphonies that I have heard. I consider the tunes a blessing to help keep my mind focused on things other than depressing thoughts. Do you have a "special gift" that helps you cope?

God/Jesus/The Holy Spirit, the triune God, should be your best friend. Lord Jesus made it perfectly clear that we all need the guidance of the Holy Spirit. He is “The Comforter” that Jesus said would come when he left. How you address God might depend on which religion in which you were raised. Do you talk to God as if he is your best friend and intimate sounding board? Do you thank God daily, for the help that you receive? How much time do you concentrate on God? Any at all? Think about these things.

Chapter 7

A Reminder of the Help Available to You

In this series of books, we have given a short summary of the many thousands of words dictated by the Ascended Masters about the beginning of the universe, how our galaxy was formed, how humanity came to be, how humanity fell from grace and an explanation of our purpose. It is basically the Master's attempt to clarify the original fairy-tale-like story of Genesis.

The Old Testament of the Bible was written beginning about 3400 years ago. Prior to that, most of the religious history was given by word of mouth. The people of that day would have had difficulty understanding the complexity of the creation story as related by the Masters. They didn't understand that there may be other planets and the possibility that other beings might live on them. The story of the "Laggards" from another planet infecting the innocent spirits of the earth would have been too much for them to grasp.

The Biblical story of the tree with the forbidden fruit was something that they could handle, and, in essence it was a convenient way to tell the story. Picturing mankind in the form of Adam and Eve was something that they could understand, and yet in the way that the story was told, Adam and Eve represented all of humanity. Telling about Eve's encounter with the devil and the forbidden fruit, then the next story about her convincing Adam to do likewise, was a convenient, yet teachable way to write about the sin that was a disobedience of the Will of God. This is not to say that Adam was not one of the first souls to come to earth.

(Note: I didn't find this explanation in the Master's writings, but since they had mentioned that they had rewritten Genesis, it seemed that a reason should be given. The forbidden fruit story had always left me unconvinced. After a lot of thought about it, the above explanation popped into my mind. I have no intention of misleading anyone, so you can choose to ignore it).

We also wrote about the Master's story of the Archangels coming to earth from the Great Central Sun even before the earth was completely formed and ready for occupation by spiritual beings. They would, and still do, perform many services to humanity, including that of

serving as the first Chohans of the 7 Rays of God. They still work with the Rays, lending their particular special power and service to the Chohan who directs the Ray to you.

If you have read any of my three earlier books, you will remember that the spiritual beings that had been seeded into our sun completed their initial training in the seven realms of God virtues that exist within the auras of the Sun God and Goddess, Helios and Vesta. There was no predetermined limit for the amount of time that they could spend in each realm, it depended on the interest that they found in the subjects that were taught in a particular realm. The mix of time and attention that they spent in each of the seven realms would determine their Ray type. For instance, if a spirit was most interested in becoming a leader, they would fall into the 1st Ray category. If they were most interested in becoming a healer, they would fall into the 5th Ray category. Some of each of the seven Ray Types would be included in the mix of spirits of each group that would visit the earth. This, of course, was to help achieve balance.

Archangel Michael was the being who brought the first cavalcade of pure, innocent spiritual beings to the earth. The destination of the first group was the area now known as the Grand Teton mountains in what is known as America, and they spread north, south, east, and west from there. The goal was for the spiritual beings to learn the art of creating matter through the power of thought, so that they might become co-creators with God. They had practiced this in the heavenly realms with a degree of success, but it is more difficult to perform in the 3rd dimension, so the earth was to be their proving ground.

According to a dictation from Archangel Michael, there were Guardian Spirits from other planets and Angelic beings that accompanied the spiritual beings to the earth and with whom the beings could see and speak. This type of relationship would continue through the first three cavalcades of spirits and into the early part of the fourth cavalcade.

The period of time allotted for the completion of the lessons was 14,000 years for each of the seven groups who were awaiting these lessons with “breaks” of return to the heavenly realms between every 2,000 years. A soul could come back to earth up to 7 times for as much as 2,000 years each time, if needed. The reason for the 7 different experiences was that the soul would be present for each of the 7 different “Rays” that were being beamed to the earth (each Ray lasting 2,000 years.) Each Ray has different attributes, virtues and qualities that impact on

our spiritual education. So, it appears that the Spiritual Hierarchy's plan of at least seven different visits to the earth before a soul was completely educated, might be the "blueprint" for the later application of Reincarnation and Karma.

The first two cavalcades completed their lessons within the allotted period, the third group took a little longer, but did complete the lessons. These first three groups were then sent to other locations in the universe for advanced training. The fourth cavalcade went to a continent called Lemuria, (Mu for short) that was in the Pacific Ocean. It was during this fourth cavalcade that the "Laggards," those souls from another planet who had been infected by the dark force, were mixed in.

Again, if you have read my other three books, you will be familiar with the story of the "Fall from Grace," the subsequent loss of spiritual direction, and the loss of visual and verbal communication with the Angelic Beings and Guardian Spirits. Eventually, these spiritual beings who were originally immortal, but later, chose to be housed in ape/man type outer bodies, began to age and die.

When Archangel Michael saw the hell that these spiritual beings were creating for themselves in the astral/psychic planes, he voluntarily entered those planes to try to help those souls disentangle themselves from the tentacles of darkness. His efforts continue to this day, but the problems have only gotten worse. It is said that he spends about 22 out of every 24 hours helping newly departed souls disentangle themselves. Archangel Michael has volunteered to remain on the earth until the last soul has made their ascension, or the Spiritual Hierarchy chooses to end this experiment.

Archangel Michael has other duties. He and his twin flame, Archaii Faith, have a temple located in the etheric realms over the vicinity of Banff, Canada. It is known in the spiritual world as the Temple of Faith and Protection. The original plan was for him to spend a great deal of his time there ministering to the needs of the later-arriving, pure spirits who were expected to be somewhat advanced. After the Fall from grace, however, those souls were not so pure anymore, so there weren't then, and there aren't now as many visitors as originally planned.

One of his duties includes taking the newly departed spirits to their first meeting with the Lords of Karma acting as somewhat of a sponsor or perhaps as a co-sponsor along with the

Master of the Ray that they are on. He makes a similar journey to the Holy Spirit's library, known as the Hall of Records with souls who are deemed to be nearing the threshold of their Ascension. This is where our "Book of Life" is kept. It contains everything about every incarnation that we have experienced. **How would you feel if, at the end of the day, today, your Book of Life was being reviewed by Archangel Michael and the Holy Spirit in your presence?** It's a sobering thought, isn't it? Whose opinion of you do you treasure most among your earthly acquaintances? What would be your most shameful revelation to that earthly personality? Now, think about that feeling of shame and then multiply it by 1,000 when faced with being in the presence of the great Spiritual beings Archangel Michael and the Holy Spirit.

Another of his duties: Archangel Michael is a member of the group of Spiritual Beings that "beam" the 1st Ray to the earth. Again, the properties of that Ray are Strength, Power, Protection, and the Will of God. His area of expertise is Protection. One way to magnify that protection is upon awakening every morning, get out of bed and sit, (sitting is recommended because if we stay in bed and try to perform the following, there is a good chance that we may fall back asleep) then call to your own Mighty I am Presence and Archangel Michael to place a protective pillar of crystal Light energy around yourself and your four lower bodies. Visualize the pillar as intense, thick crystalized Light energy similar to that of the sun glistening on a body of water. The pillar should be at least 8 feet in diameter to encase your four lower bodies. Then ask Archangel Michael for the pillar to dispel all discord, all fear and doubt. Then to dispel all your other concerns such as anger, violence, and retribution etc. You can make the list as long as you like. Experiment with the list until it feels tailor-made for you.

You can also ask him to place a pillar of protective Light energy around other family members. After a while, you may begin to feel a friendship forming with Archangel Michael.

You can probably understand that Archangel Michael is, at times, stretched thin, but he does have a large legion of angels at his command. There are times when he has to ask some member of his legion of Angels to take the newly departed souls to the interview with the Lords of Karma. **However, there is a chance for us to help lighten his load.** He suggests two things: A prayer for the newly departed, repeated three times per day. The Prayer is reprinted below

from: Bridge to Freedom Journal, Book 1. Available from Ascended Master's Teaching Foundation, P.O. Box 466, Mount Shasta, Ca. 96067.

In the name and by the power and presence of God I am, and in the name of Ascended Master Jesus Christ, I call to You, Archangel Michael on behalf of all the men, women and children who are being released from their bodies during this twenty-four-hour period.

Cut them free instantly from the magnetic pull of earth, the things of earth and all the passions, lusts and appetites that might hold them earthbound.

Send thy Angels of Light to enfold them and carry them quickly through the effluvia of earth's atmosphere to the realms of Light and Peace. Here, prepare them through the merciful fires of purification to stand before the Lords of Karma with their robes as white as snow.

Accept the good of my Causal body as an offering before this great council of judgement that these souls may be taken at once to the schoolrooms where they may best learn the law and reembody, if necessary, in harmony to achieve their great victory in the Light.

Thank you, oh Prince of the Heavenly Host for your guardian presence among us, for your constant and watchful care of us, not only at the time of so-called death, but through all our days.

The second suggestion will be most beneficial to you, but if you follow it religiously, Archangel Michael will also benefit because it will lessen your personal karma, thereby making his work on your behalf at the time of your passing a bit easier.

If you read the second book, "Using Meditation as a Path to Please God on your Spiritual Journey," you will be familiar with the Rays. **The 7th Ray is the Ray of Invocation, Mercy, Compassion, Transmutation, Forgiveness and Freedom. The Chohan of this Ray is The Ascended Master Saint Germain.** He is the Master that began the teaching that became the "I am material." **That 7th Ray, of course, is the one that you should use to transmute your Karma.** If you are already following this discipline, you are probably using that Ray on Saturday. The Violet\Purple Ray is an enormous gift to those that are trying to perfect themselves and lessen their karma.

Archangel Michael understands the enormity of that gift and his suggestion is that you also spend time every night, 30 minutes, if possible, before bedtime using the violet/purple flame to burn away the sins and accumulated dark matter of the day.

It is suggested that you stand while visualizing yourself within a pillar of flame. Reach up with both hands above your head inviting the flame to enter each hand. Then bring your hands down to caress, in a downward motion, each part of your body. As you finish each stroke, shake your hands free of the dark matter that you have pulled out of the electrons. Do this three times. You can visualize the particles as being black on the first pass, dark grey on the second pass and light grey on the third pass.

The sacred fire of purification will render this service and help to cleanse the particles of dark matter that have collected in the small wedge-shaped openings around each electron. This will allow each electron to spin faster, thus making it more sensitive to Light.

Love, joy, happiness and light are the result of the use of the Sacred Violet/Purple flame when you invoke it with faith. This would also prevent the persistent accumulation of metaphorical darkness over numerous lifetimes from becoming even more dense. The Masters say that if you're not getting results, it is because you have not consciously accepted the reality of the purifying fire.

Of course, you could ignore Archangel Michael's request (which happens frequently). He wrote that time after time when we are in crisis, he has tried to convey to us the perfect thing to do. He noted that nine times out of ten, it is as if the wind has blown his words back into his face. I ask you to consider the tremendous effort that he has made to try to help us. Like Jesus, who made the ultimate sacrifice, he probably doesn't get much in the way of thanks.

Each of the Masters, Archangels, Archaii and Great Elohim beings offer special spiritual gifts. For instance, for those of you that are experiencing illness, you can call on Archangel Raphael and the Holy Mother Mary for help from their healing grace. For those of you that are making a concerted effort to purify yourself, you can call on the great Elohim Claire and his divine counterpart, the great Elohim Astrea, for help with the purification of every electron within every atom within every cell. There are more than twenty different important spiritual

gifts incorporated into the 7 Rays. Study book 2, “Using Meditation as a Path to Please God on Your Spiritual Journey” that explains the Rays to find the help that you need.

Archangel Michael is puzzled by the idea that those of us that have now been exposed to the teachings of the Masters continue to exist in a state of spiritual slumber when the Masters are waiting for us to knock on the door of enlightenment. **You** have to make the decision to knock on the door.

Somewhat along that same line, Master Morya mused the following: “It’s a funny thing about the human race, after you’re in it, you want to be out of it; and once you’re out of it, you want to be back in it again.”

We are, indeed, a strange group. But why do you think that Master Morya said that? One answer would be that at the end of our lifetimes; we are going to be shown the plan for our soul going into that lifetime and how things should have worked out. For most of us, we will see how we became distracted from our goal and went off in another direction. Then, we will want to come back and make it right.

Chapter 8

The Big Questions

Among the big questions is "**what do you want"?** You have a long history of thinking about what you want. You probably spend some time every day making a few adjustments to your list of wants. I know that my list changed as I aged, particularly after I found the writings from the Masters. Among the biggest and most important question of them all is **what does God want from you?**

Have you given any thought to what God wants? I had some thoughts, but they were scattered and unorganized. According to a sermon by Catholic Bishop Robert Barron, he found the answer in the writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas, and I quote, **"God wants His People to recover their lost integrity."** I haven't heard a better description of what He wants, so we will go with that one. The biggest question that you should be asking yourself now is, **where do you stand with God?** Did that question shake you a bit? The next question would be, **what can you do about it?**

According to the Ascended Masters, when we first came to the earth as pure spirits, each entity was so innocent and God-directed that we could all read each other's thoughts. What if that were true today? Amazon could make a hundred fortunes selling thought shields.

Jesus could read the minds of the people of his day. The Bible confirms that fact. What if he came back today? I've thought about what type of impression he might have of me. I certainly wouldn't want to be the first one that he ran into. He might pick up on too many of my false-self shadings. Those things that I try to suppress, like my buried lust for women. Like my concern for the image that I present to the world. Like my innermost fears. Like my troublesome ego that sometimes gets puffed up. Like my all too-shallow search of my own conscience. Like my charitable giving that is made to fit the formula in the Bible instead of all from the heart. Like my penchant for worrying about those things that I can't control. Like my dislike for certain politicians. Like wishing that karma would deal with those troublesome dictators who threaten nuclear war. Like my habit of listening to news stories and then making judgements. Like my lack of patience with certain types of people. Like espousing but not actually feeling unconditional

love for all people. Like my sometimes lack of daily follow-through on prayers and decrees. Like the lack of the proper amount of zeal that I should use when I am trying to spread the Master's teaching on the Spiritual Hierarchy and the way that the universe works.

Some say that there are just too many other voices clamoring for our attention for us to be able to hear the voice of God. That may be partially true, and when you think of all the stories coming your way, some of which sound dire, some of which sound important, some of which are about your favorite sports team, some of which are about your investments in the stock market, always a lot of negative garbage from the politicians, a note from your friend about an outing this weekend, a call from your dentist about an appointment on Thursday, a call from the dealer about the unexpectedly expensive repair on your car, and all of these things before 10 A.M. So, how do you make time for God. He is, after all, the most important Being in your world. I suggest that the best time to do it is early morning, before your day begins. Set up a place where you can be alone. Learn to meditate. Talk to God about your problems and ask for His guidance. He is intimately interested in you. God wants you to succeed in life, not just spiritually, but in every way. Ask what you can do for Him? He will find a way to let you know.

In the first part of the Lord's Prayer, there are the words, **"Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name."** So, Jesus is letting us know the proper relationship between ourselves and God. He is our father, He is in heaven and He is holy. **"Thy Kingdom Come."** That is Jesus' way of expressing one of God's wants, the hope that the people of the earth will experience the love and peaceful co-existence of the heavenly realms. The Masters were hoping that after the Second World War and the peace that ensued, there would be a great opportunity for God's Kingdom on earth (an "Eden" type of existence) to happen. It hasn't happened yet, but that was the plan. The next sentence is **"Thy Will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."** Jesus was instructing us to obey the Father's wishes, to become "one" with his Will, like we were prior to coming to earth. **"Give us this day our daily bread,"** Jesus' way of asking for sustenance. **"And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us."** This was the crux of the basic attitude necessary for getting along with our fellow humans. **"And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil."** Jesus' way of asking for protection from the snares of the devil. On the surface it appears to be a simple prayer, made even simpler

by the fact that most people say it by rote, but when you analyze it, it covers everything that we need to live a successful spiritual life.

The kingdom of God is a kingdom of love. With the way that the world appears to be going some 70+ plus years after the end of WWII, it's doubtful that the "Kingdom" of love and peace is going to happen any time soon. Consider the all-consuming lust for political power and the quest for control of the people in a country that it brings, the waste of monies that occur in the process of trying to "buy votes," (including unrealistic promises of "free stuff" that all too often becomes law) which is pushing our country closer and closer to insolvency, the hatred of people who are on one side or another of the political spectrum, including name-calling, insults and threats, rioting, violence and assassination attempts of members of the other party, the unbelievable but sinful support for, and agreement with people who kill others for political or economic reasons, the amount of effort that some expend trying to scam people out of their savings, the thought that some hold that the news media may have sold its' soul and the huge negative and unholy influence of social media. (If you think I'm wrong about social media, how much time do you spend looking at your smartphone versus the time you spend thinking about God?) Consider also, how close we live to the edge of total annihilation with the massive build-up of nuclear weapons.

I find myself sometimes wondering if there is any hope for humanity. Over the last 40 years, Church attendance has been down significantly, and fewer people have a belief in God. (On the bright side, there is, however, a very recent incidence of young people expressing an interest in learning about God, so maybe that's our glimmer of hope).

In Matthew's gospel (13:24-30) Jesus is using a parable to describe the then-current and still-current state of the kingdom. "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But, while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared."

The owner's servants came to him and said, "Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?"

"An enemy did this." he replied.

The servants asked him, “Do you want us to go and pull them up?”

No,” he answered. “because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time, I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.”

If you have read my earlier books, you have read the story of how the earth was originally seeded with pure, beginner spirits encased in etheric, thought-form spiritual bodies. We were destined to learn precipitation (the process of creating matter by the power of the mind) and to eventually become co-creators with God. Some of the early members of our group did learn their basic lessons and moved on to further spiritual training and enlightenment.

You will also remember that at a point in the process, a large group of spirits from another planet that had become infected with the dark force was integrated into our pool of spirits. That integration is reflected in the above parable. The “good” seed represents the pure spirits, and the “weeds” represent those that are infected by the dark force. The parable implies that at the end of whatever this “stage” of the trial period is, the “weeds” will be burned (the second death?) and the “wheat” will be gathered in the Master’s barn.

Does this mean that someone, or perhaps the collective group of Cosmic Beings that agreed with the earth’s offer to take in the “Laggards” made a mistake? Lawyers could argue on either side of this case.

If the earth hadn’t offered, it appears that all the “Laggards” would have experienced the “second death,” an annihilation of their body and soul essences. Taking it a step in the other direction, if the pure spirits hadn’t been exposed to the dark forces, they probably would have finished the first part of their training about 4 million years ago, would have merged with their Holy Christ Selves and would have moved on to other lessons in different realms or dimensions.

Is what happened a bad thing? Our struggling souls might think so. But probably not so with God. Since God is infinite, time is probably meaningless to Him. Saving any spirit that is thought to be lost is more important to God than timing, and according to the Masters, some of the “Laggards” have, indeed, turned to the “Light.” Another thought: those of us that were

seeded in the original "good" spirit group have really been tested by fire over the millennia. We ought to be very strong if we finally wake up and break free of the devil's shackles.

What would that take and what would that look like? It includes several things: Understanding our original purpose for this spiritual journey: **That we are not meant for this world, the world is only a schoolroom. We are going someplace to perform bigger things in our service to God and the expansion of His universe.** But we became distracted by the Laggards and their fascination with the sense pleasures of the earth and emulated them, while becoming trapped here. A rebellion, as such. **We must also understand something very important, that our God is a God of love. Jesus, God the Son, came to earth to show what unconditional love looks like.** You can do the work on all the other things that need attention, but if you haven't learned to love, you're probably going to be told that you need to keep trying until you do learn.

The remedy: to understand what happened, **to own up to and repent for our sins and to fully understand the danger of the treadmill of fascination with bodily pleasures and worldly goals** that we have been on for centuries. Next, **to delve into the insidious dangers of the habits of the mind that we may think are natural or normal but in effect, block our ability to purify our minds.**

To get off that treadmill and **commit to contemplating the mind of God once again while making a sincere effort to perfect ourselves.** These things will lead us to truly want to become one with the Will of God. Next, will come the desire to become one with the Christ consciousness. The Ascended Master consciousness is one with the Christ consciousness, so it only makes sense to use the Master's teachings on prayer, meditation, decreeing and the use of the Rays that are spelled out in the earlier books, to help in the perfection process. **The next to last step is to achieve mastery over our four lower bodies**. (Not an easy thing to do. A whole book could be devoted to that subject.) **The last step is to make our own Ascension to reunion with our Christ Selves at the end of our lives.**

Of course, the big questions for which we don't have answers are: **How much time do we have left to do all of that? Everything has a beginning and an ending. The Masters indicate**

that we are holding up the progression of the entire galaxy. What is the timetable for the dissolution of our solar system?

If there are only two thousand years left in this cycle, as mentioned by Master St. Germain, do we get another shot at life before the time runs out on this planet? There are, after all, a lot of souls using the earth as their schoolroom. Who qualifies for the next chance?

What if the rulers of nations that are intent on conquering others lead us into a world war replete with atomic weapons, thereby eliminating most of the population. If that happens, the chances for rebirth would be very small.

Is there a chance that another planet in yet another solar system might take us in? One of the Masters hinted at that. But that was 70 + years ago. We would now be considered the "Laggards," and we would be an even larger group (3 times larger) than the original one that infected the earth. Based on what has happened here since, and how hopeless it seems, would you?

You may not be familiar with the following story, but it happened in the 1930's. Sister Maria Faustina Kowalska was a nun (later ordained a saint) who was visited by Lord Jesus while living in a convent in Poland. Jesus spoke to Sister Maria at length about the divine mercy of God and said that he was disappointed that people were not coming to him for mercy. **Jesus is quoted as saying to Sister Faustina, "Let no soul fear to draw near to me, even though it's sins be as scarlet."**

Among his other statements to Sister Faustina that seem like directives:" Ask for mercy." "Show mercy to others". And the spine-tingler, **"Divine mercy is mankind's final hope for salvation. Don't miss this time of Grace, because after it would come the time of Justice."** The last two sentences seem to tie into St. Germain's warning that time is running out for this earthly experiment, and that the end-times judgement, as Biblically predicted, is approaching.

These are all questions for which we have no answers. So, perhaps you can see why I am urging you to act now.

Jesus said, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect". Lest that seem impossible, and you consider giving up, take heart from the words of Jesus to Sister Faustina about divine mercy, and also take heart from the instructions of the Masters, who taught that

physical incarnations are no longer required if we have dealt with at least 51% of the total of our karma from all lives. Of course, that means that you must make a super effort in this life. The learning will continue in Heaven. These books, which are an attempt to be a summary of the Master's teachings, are meant to help instruct you on how to achieve that goal.

As for me, I, John, have no idea if I meet the requirement for being worthy. I have a great sense of shame for the sins that I have committed, and I suspect that there is still much karma that I haven't dealt with from past lives. As for love, I think that I love, but, often, it seems to be contingent on people being "good souls." That is not what God meant. Unconditional love is what is needed. So, I hope that I have some additional time to work on those things.

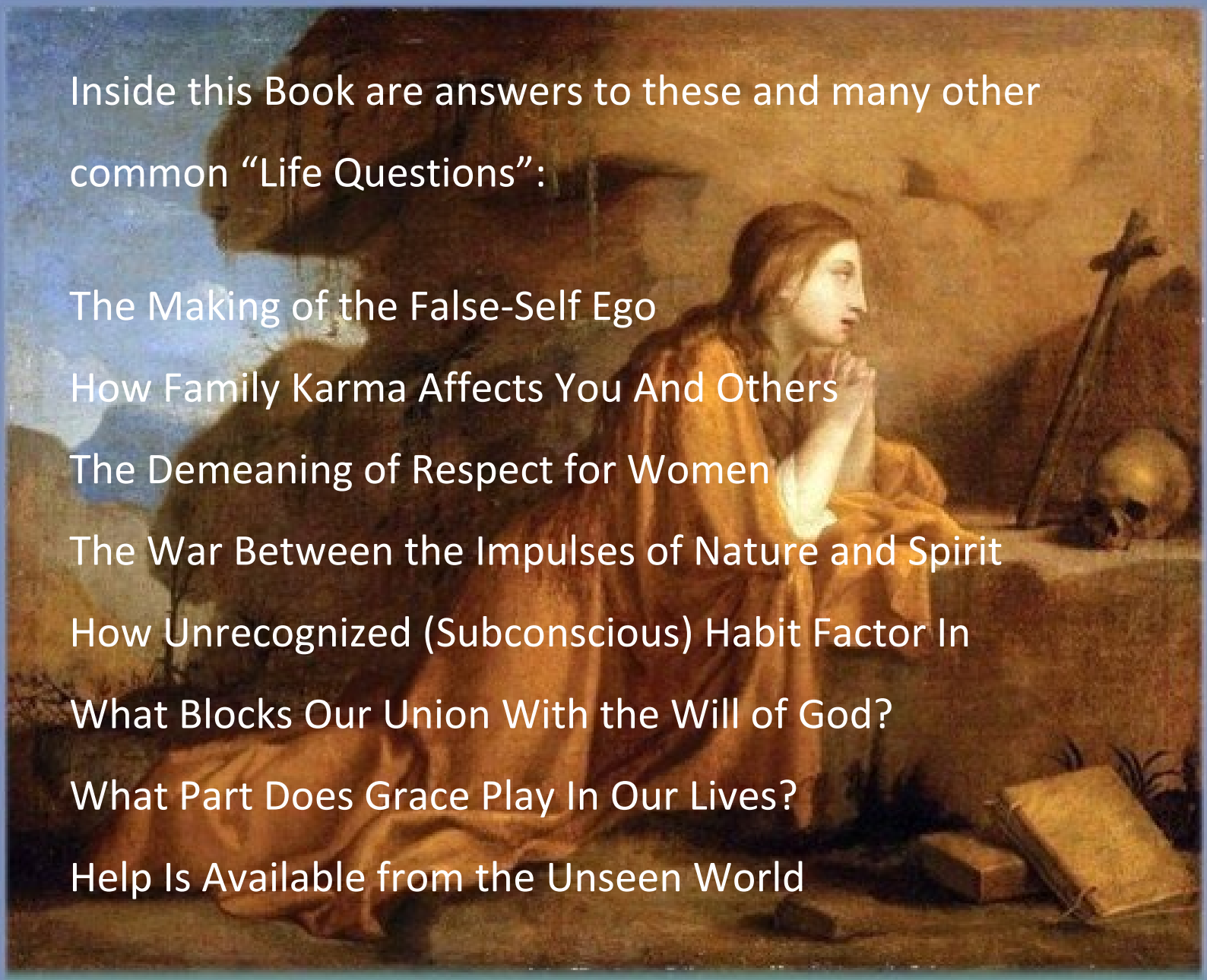
Beloved Infinite and Unknowable Father/Mother God, have mercy on me, a sinner. Beloved Ascended Master and Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

If you want to read a portion or the entirety of the Master's dictations, they are available:

The I Am Material
Saint Germain Press, Inc.
1120 Stonehedge Drive
Schaumberg, Illinois 60194

The Bridge to Freedom Information
Ascended Master Teaching Foundation
P. O. Box 466
Mount Shasta, California 96067

Blessings to all!



Inside this Book are answers to these and many other common “Life Questions”:

The Making of the False-Self Ego

How Family Karma Affects You And Others

The Demeaning of Respect for Women

The War Between the Impulses of Nature and Spirit

How Unrecognized (Subconscious) Habit Factor In

What Blocks Our Union With the Will of God?

What Part Does Grace Play In Our Lives?

Help Is Available from the Unseen World

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