

June-July, 1948

My dear Friends:

This time I want to talk about Trust and Self-surrender. I have lately been studying a little book by Father de Caussade on "Abandonment." He says in it some very lovely and true things. For long now I have felt that the Great Teacher of us all is Life, and Life never means us ill, only, and at every moment, under every conceivable circumstances, our eternal good. For what is life, and that never-ceasing succession of events which we call Karma? There is only One Life, One Consciousness, in all the universe, and the succession of events which constitute our daily lives is that Divine Life or Will in action.

What is the "Will of God?" It is the purpose or direction of the universe. I remember Dr. Besant telling us that on the Nirvanic plane it looks like a resistless flowing tide of light. Nothing can resist it, for there is no other will but His. And it means, in the end, as Emerson told us, absolute fulfilment and bliss for every living thing. For ananda, bliss, is the greatest attribute of that Life. That is why we want to be happy, which means to find our true selves. That cannot be done all at once, so, as H.P.B. puts it, during our lives of probation here on earth let us realize that enduring happiness is not to be found, and "wait with patience the hour of our true, our real birth."

That Will expresses itself in the great Laws of Nature, "with Whom is no variableness or shadow of turning," for the Laws of Nature are the imprint of the Divine Mind upon matter. They are the true "commandments of God." They act with magnificent impersonality, and are the same, yesterday, today, and forever. The Law is not only just, but merciful, too. The Latin mercedes, from which we derive the word, mercy, means "recompense." "To Thee O Lord, belongeth mercy and justice, for Thou renderest to every man according to his works." And the Prophet, Jeremiah, wrote: "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee." It is all summed up so beautifully in an ancient saying from an Upanishad: "The Universe exists for the sake of the Self." We so often think to find God and His purpose in some far away heaven or in some high state of meditation, whereas the truth is that He is as much here in this world as on the Nirvanic plane. That, in fact nothing in all the world, is so near. "Nearer is He than breathing, closer than hands and feet." I heard Dr. Besant preach a sermon on the Love of God. She said the Love of God was all round us like electricity in the air, and that it only needed that we open our hearts to it; in His Ishta-Deva, or personal aspect in the Christ, He says: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice..."

Now where do we hear that Voice and touch that Life? The Divine Voice spoke of old to men through His great Teachers and Prophets. But all the time He is speaking individually to you and to me. He speaks to mankind in general events, but to each one of us through the little events of daily life. For have we ever realized that Life, Karma, is God in Action? "Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?" The answer is that He asks of us nothing more than the duty of the moment. In fulfilling that as perfectly as we know how, we are doing His Will, just what He would have us do. Exteriorly nothing more is happening to us than happens to the rest of mankind, but interiorly the eye of faith discovers and develops nothing less than God

working great things. "The first duty of every Theosophist," wrote H.P.B., "is to do his duty by every duty." Dr. Besant told us that if we have truly and wholly given our hearts to the Master and to God through Him, what He asks of us will be indicated by the events of daily life.

Father de Caussade says that "sanctity consists in but one thing--fidelity to the order of God; the active part consists in fulfilling the duties imposed upon us; the passive part in lovingly accepting all that God sends us each moment." He call these little daily events "the shadows which veil the Divine Action," and says that it is all the more visible to the eye of faith when hidden under appearances most repugnant to the senses. The Divine Love, he says, is communicated to us through the veil of creatures, and sometimes mostly so through those who are seemingly unjust and unkind. Is not one of the steps on the Way "a courageous endurance of personal injustice?" Dr. Besant told us that we should be grateful to unpleasant people who step on our toes and jar our susceptibilities, for they are often our greatest teachers.

At any moment, under any circumstances, Life is shaping us for divine and immortal ends. Shaping us through the changing, fleeting events of life. It is more difficult to see this in disappointment, sorrow and loss, but often they bring us the most wonderful lights and illuminations of all. Says our author: "The soul that sees God in all the smallest things and in the most desolating and fatal events, receives all with equal joy, exultation and respect. That which others fear and fly from with horror she opens all her doors to receive with honor." "This is God, all is well." Krishnaji said the same, that most of us flee from sorrow, but that if we opened our arms to it we would grow and learn so wonderfully. The great Saints God guided through the terrors of a spiritual dark night, but in that hidden soil supernatural graces grew.

Most of us have hidden fears, sometimes unconsciously to ourselves. Try to relax, not to fear; "rest in the Lord Who is Life itself." The Master K.H. wrote that to Mr. Judge. He told him to desire nothing for his separated self, no results which give that self a sense of power, but only to try all the time to reach nearer to the Centre of Life, the Divinity we all share. "Draw on the breath of the great life throbbing in us all," wrote He, "and let faith (which is unlearned knowledge) carry you through your life as a bird flies in the air--undoubtedly." Never mind what the events of life are, they are for the best. "Whatever is, is best." Bishop Leadbeater was fond of quoting that. Never mind what other people are. There is no sin, only lack of growth. Never mind what we are; let us be willing to be what we are. We do not really know ourselves. God and the Master know us better. Leave all to Him and grow as a flower grows, by ceaseless aspiration and love of beauty and truth. And above all, trust Life which is God in action and "learn of Me." He speaks to us all the time. He can speak to us when we are studying a book giving us knowledge the author, himself, never possessed. In peace shall we grow. And peace is the fruit of self-surrender.

When I was in prison long years ago, we were allowed to have in our cells only a Bible, a hymnbook and a primer on hygiene. So I amused myself in reading all the hymns to judge which was the most Theosophical. Only one completely satisfied me, the well-known hymn written by the saintly Bishop Bonar:

"Thy way, not mine, O Lord, however dark it be!
Lead me by Thine own hand, choose Thou the path for me.
The Kingdom that I see is Thine; so let the way
That leads to it be Thine, else must I surely stray."

Your affectionate friend,

Clara Codd