

Message for April 8

Hello to All! So this week we have to make and wear masks! That is if we want to safely go anywhere! I'm doing what I can stay safe, pass this time and stay calm, but it is a challenge. I hope & pray that we get through this together/apart? Yes, apart now, together soon! Well, here is the next part of the message on spirituality. I guess why these words speak to me so much is that – my studies have led me to believe that healthy human relationships are vital to God's intended purpose for us. Love. Kindness. Joy! Let us keep God in our hearts, our souls connected and do the very best we can. LV, ML

### **Spiritual Health, Part 2**

Progress in spirituality is measured in three areas, all of which involve relationships:

- 1) The relationship with a power greater than ourselves.
- 2) The relationship with one's Self.
- 3) The relationship with others.

When these relationships break down all facets of human health are likely to erode. The symptoms of dysfunction at first may not be physical but are, nevertheless, very painful. The sufferer is likely to describe these symptoms in terms of loneliness, low self-esteem, shame, interpersonal conflicts, loss, anxiety, fear, depression or problems that have taken away the joyous adventure of living. Diagnosis: Soul Sickness!

#### **1. Relationship to a power greater than ourselves.**

Spirituality makes possible a connectedness to a Higher Power – Ground of Being – God.

Religion characterizes the image of that creative source, making it less abstract; but to deny a relationship to a higher power that transcends and dwells within the human soul is to break the link that connects us to the source of that which is eternal - and without such a connection there is likely to be no health within us.

#### **2. Relationship to Self.**

Living by matters that don't really matter in the scheme of what makes living worth the effort can make it difficult to find the true and essential self.

Thomas Merton wrote of the spiritual life as a journey from the false self to the real self. In "Seeds of Contemplation" he said:

"For me to be a saint means to be myself. Therefore the problem of sanctity and salvation is in fact the problem of finding out who I am and discovering my true self."

The spiritual pilgrimage leads us not only to the discovery of the real self but also to the *acceptance* of that self. The divine creative power brought that self into being and is the only self with which it can connect. Character defects and human limitations may be reflected in the real self and may lead to making wrong choices; however, the spiritually healthy person knows that although he or she is capable of making mistakes, *they* are never a mistake!

Next week: #3

*Psalm 68:19 Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens.*