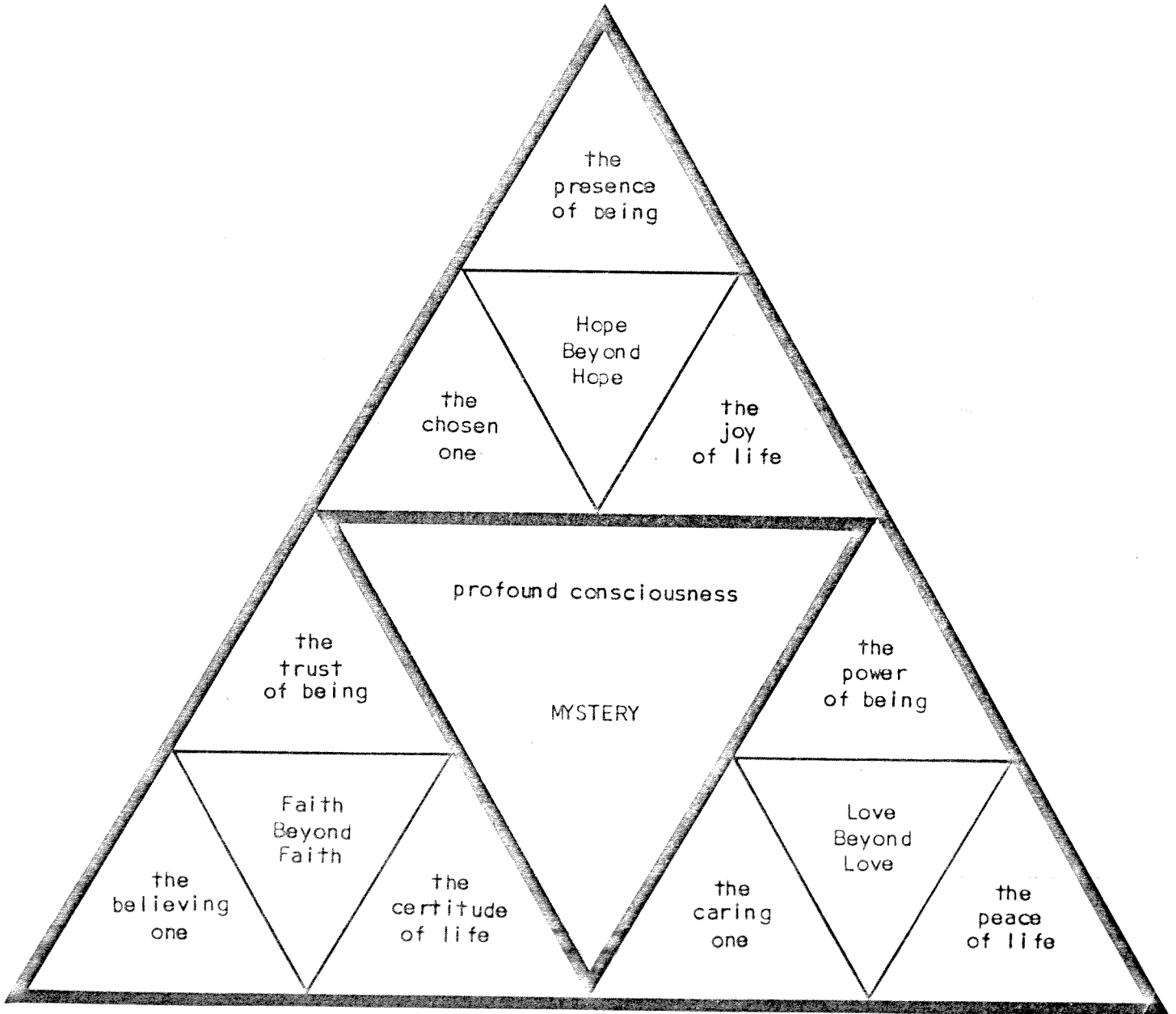


AND HOPE APPEARETH

THE LIVING ENDLESSNESS



THE DARK NIGHT

THE LONG MARCH

Temple Collegium

December 30, 1974

HOPE

Stating the spirit climate of the quarter is always the critical context for all of our work. Many of us have learned the hard way that even in recruiting courses, the primary problem is getting enough clarity on the spirit context to genuinely address people's lives. People in development who are out touching the world have data on this and they need it more than someone doing office work. But that is not really true, either. Whether you are locked up in an E.I. "tomb", or out in the midst of the world, there is still that need for the quarter's spirit context.

What has always shocked me is that the spirit movement, wherever it exists in the world, will have the same basic experience. The details will be different but when we get together to talk you will always be surprised to find that the fundamental depth experience is the same. The Lord sets the struggle for us, we do not. History gives us the spirit movement's calling and struggle for any particular quarter.

Last summer we moved from the mode of faith to the mode of love and encountered the abyss of hope during the fall quarter. This happened to us once before when we moved from the preoccupation with knowing to the preoccupation with doing and fell into being. It may be that this is always what happens. When you move across from faith to a concern with love you are driven down into the deeps. We experienced this last quarter, when the harsh demands of history came to us as a deep assault on the specific ways we had decided to love the world.

The fundamental constants of history, life phases, Ur images and obediences to the way that life actually is also socked us hard last quarter. The way you talk about that "sock" is that faith is in crisis at the point of love. Love is so demanding, love is so depth dealing to the human spirit that it raises in your mind the question as to whether or not you trust God who has put you in such a strain. It is a deep kind of strain.

I remember watching news programs last quarter. It was not the harshness of the news exactly that was a shock to us, the fact is that life is harsh. It was the fact that we were supposed to be the people who had fallen in love with this world, but this world came to us as something hard to fall in love with. You were disappointed, or aware in a new way of how tough it is to live in this world and deeply clear about what is demanded of you. I remember one news program when a Palestinian guerrilla had been killed. They threw his body out of the window and the Jewish population of the city continued beating on the body, tearing it to shreds. What struck me in the news program was not that life was harsh, I guess I knew that, but the incredible passion that those people had towards that dead body and the realization that I was responsible for those people, their passion. A wave of dread, of crisis, swept over me, as to whether or not we would continue as men of faith to love such a world. The crisis of faith is not something that goes away. It is a permanent dynamic. It is the one you have to discover first in the deep descent to what we call the dark night. And love is not something that goes away, we recovered that word in Summer '73. Love begins to bubble up in your being, and here the love we are talking about is the love of the mystery and of the world in the mystery, or love of the world in the world. It is the love of God and neighbor, the love of world and mystery. When that love is born, it tears you up. We call that the long march and the birth of authentic love as it matures and further kills your false love. One way to talk about this is as a purgatory experience. Love is turned on in your life and then everything that is selfishness and self hate is boiled and burned to a crisp. Since all of us are made out of nothing else but selfishness and self hate, the birth of love in our life means that we are getting boiled to a crisp. That is the experience which we call the long march. The way we have talked about unfulfillment, rootlessness, and so on describe the phenomenon of being burned to a crisp by the appearance of love. When we talk about humiliation, we are talking about an illumination of the deeps of life which leads us back to crisis.

It seems like this kind of thing goes on all the time, as you move back and forth across this gap. When you are just preoccupied by faith you have just one thing to worry about, and that is faith. The minute you begin to preoccupy yourself with love, you have all three to worry about, because you have crossed this gap, and something additional has come up into the center. The something additional is hope.

One of the ways we have talked about hope being experienced in relation to faith is strength and trust. In relationship to love, hope is experienced as the power to love. Faith is a blind leap of trust. As life gets more and more intense the blindness in that leap is overwhelming because you are trusting in the mystery. It means that you are walking blind and the presence of the mystery, the presence of trust in the mystery comes to you as a firmness. Hope gives faith firmness. It is empowered by the mystery itself.

On the other side, hope comes as the presence of the promised land into which love is trying to bring everyone. Without that kind of presence, love is without power to actually move. Your care has been born. You have organized in your mind your vision of the actual concerns of the world but you sit there and study, or go back to bed, or you quit. Hope is the appearance of a new mood. It is the appearance of confidence that going out and loving God in the world with your life is actually what you must do, that this is actually the only life there is for you.

If hope is struggling over against false hope, there is perhaps some other way to go about living. I want to raise this question in a minute with just a little bit more spinning to organize in our minds the directions in which to look. It may be as important at this moment as getting out more data. You always have this double problem on your hands. You have got a whole lot more data on the spiritual climate than you have organized in your mind to practically use. On the other hand, you need to get out more data, to find a grounding for everything that you say.

Let me do another little chart here. Faith occurs within the dark night. You might say that it does not occur anywhere else. It is not as if it were synonymous with the dark night. Humiliation is not faith. I will put these categories up here. You know that they are humiliation, weakness, resentment and suffering. These categories are not faith. They are the death of faith. Humiliation is the death of all of faith in yourself, certainly, and weakness, resentment, and suffering. These are just the illumination of what life is. You are a humiliated being and will always be one. You are a weak, resenting, suffering being and will always be one. The dark night simply illuminates the way life is. That always comes to you as crisis, whether life is worth living or not. "If I am going to be as humiliated as all this I think I will quit," and so on. So faith is always driven to crisis by the dark night, and yet the faith in the mystery only occurs in the midst of such crisis. But what's really being killed is your false faith, your faith in yourself, your faith in some Idea you had about life. The mystery is always gloriously humiliating you which means opening you up to living beyond yourself.

	FAITH occurs within	HOPE appears as	LOVE occasions
I L L U M	Humiliation Weakness Resentment Suffering	Spirit Home Power Tears Bliss	Rootlessness Weariness Ineffectivity Unfulfillment
O W T O H R E L R D	Freedom	Tranquillity	Care
I L L U S	Tempter	Hopes	Desire

Now love is like a fire that bubbles up inside the man who is already experiencing the dark night. I think the dark night clears a lot of trash out of the way, so that love can bubble up. When love bubbles up it occasions in us these categories we have been working with: rootlessness, weariness, ineffectiveness and unfulfillment. If you feel especially rootless this morning it is because love is bubbling up. If you feel especially weary, that is a good sign, love is bubbling up, love of God and neighbor. It may be falling in love with some new chick that will overcome weariness, but falling in love with God and neighbor makes you weary every time. But that is just a sign of what is happening to you when love is bubbling up.

The same is true of ineffectivity and Unfulfillment. You can be effective in a very limited, prescribed arena of love. Anybody can be effective, and spirit men can be twice as effective as most men. And so being effective in terms of getting my job done, that is no problem. All of us can be effective and be far more effective than we are. In the midst of all of our wonderful effectiveness, love of God and neighbor bubbles up and shows us that all of our effectiveness is after all accomplishing a great deal in a small context. But in the context of all of human history, which we love, just what is the whole of 5th City accomplishing?

What are twenty-four demonstrations, twenty-four dinky little demonstrations all around the world actually amounting to? How many people are you going to teach this quarter out of the three and one half billion people occupying this planet? Or when you really get clear on what love of God and neighbor is, everything appears to be a spit in the ocean. fulfillment is the same kind of thing. When love bubbles up, these are the signs that bubble up with it.

Now we have been talking about hope appearing. I like that category, "Hope appears." The only thing that I knew of that appeared before was angels. Angels appeared. All through the Bible angels appear. I have always been fascinated with angels appearing. It helped me a little bit when I realized that angels were awe, and the reason the angels appeared was that God acted. Or that the mystery had come into the situation and therefore the angels appeared. Hope doesn't appear because we do something. It is an angelic appearance, it is an activity of God that we have to respond to. It is an activity that happens, only in the midst of the crisis of faith and the dark night. It is only in the midst of the purgation of your false love that is going on that your true love appears. It is in that context that hope appears. It is in one sense nothing other than the intensification of faith and love. Hope is not some new thing or some way out of the faith and love struggle. It is the taking of the faith and love struggle clear to the bottom. It is with the bubbling up of mobility or power or confidence that you can go on in your faith and love.

I do not know what category will finally end up there, but this is one area of interest to me. Humiliation and rootlessness are both in one sense a lack of a home. Your home is in the East, your home is in the mystery, your home is in the other world. You live in the other world and you live in the mystery. You just sort of visit this world, as a servant. It is the appearance of your spirit home, where the spirit world genuinely becomes your home, so that when humiliation knocks you down, you say "Ah ha, I am at home." When rootlessness overwhelms you, you say "Ah ha, I am at home." It is not some dumb cynical thing you are saying, you really are at home. I mean you experience yourself as being at home. I remember being very excited about studying the crucifixion and the resurrection last quarter, because the resurrection came off this time, instead of the crucifixion. I began to see that the resurrection was just being at home with the power that crucifies you, that having been crucified by God you were raised up in glorious delight at the relationship you were having with God. This was your home, this relationship to the mystery. This launch into the sheer abyss was your home.

Here you put the category of power, as over against weariness and weakness I think most of us have been seeing signs of this for quarters. In the midst of just being weary, you nevertheless were capable of telling your weariness to go sit in the corner and behave itself. You had to go recruit an Academy, or whatever you were doing, and you had the ability to be weary and go on being weary, and handle that weakness. The ability to be weak, to go on being weak, but handle that weakness, in the concrete, was an ability that was given to you. It was an appearance of power amazing to others and to yourself because normally these kinds of environments and crises in your life cause collapse. But you didn't collapse and the ability not to collapse is one of the ways of talking about what hope is.

I don't know what these other two categories might be, but put fear and bliss in here to talk about them.

Hope is the presence of a wild spirit reality, no matter what kind of images we finally use to talk about it, concretely, in the midst of faith and love. If you had to talk about faith in one of our categories of the other world, it is freedom. It is the free deed of abandoning yourself to the mystery. If you had to talk about love as one of the categories of the other world, it is very closely related to care. It collects confusion and passion for the mystery in your life. And we had better relate closer to tranquillity. It is the presence of the objective tranquillity bubbling up in the midst of all the lack of other things.

We are going to be struggling here with hope, over against the world's hope. In faith you are always struggling over against the illusion, or the tempter, as St. John calls it. The tempter is always promising something you will not get. In love you are always struggling over against desire.

All three of these struggles seem to me to go on forever in your spiritual life. The question of faith this quarter is what does it mean that after many years of struggling with the tempter, we are free to trust the mystery? We have moved over here into the struggles with the passions of God and the passions of our being, and dropped into the struggle of hope and eternal tranquillity. What does that mean? Well, as you try to organize your screen for looking at life this quarter, where will you be looking? In what kinds of directions will you be looking? I don't mean what you will be seeing, because you do not know what you are going to see. The Lord surprises us every single quarter. But as you try to organize your mind to look at spiritual reality In this coming quarter, what are some of the reflections that you would like to share?

Gene Marshall