

Excerpts from 2.9.67 [*+Instructions for Spiritual Living*] The Working of Grace

You are not really walking alone. The very love which has awakened within you for the Overself is a reflection of the love which is being shown towards you.

... The very fact you have consciously begun the quest is itself a manifestation of Grace, ...
... Thus the very search upon which you have embarked, the studies you are making, and the meditations you are practicing are all inspired by the Overself from the beginning and sustained by it to the end.

The Overself is already at work even before you begin to seek it. Indeed you have taken to the quest in unconscious obedience to the divine prompting. And that prompting is the first movement of Grace. Even when you believe that you are doing these things for yourself, it is really Grace that is opening the heart and enlightening the mind from behind the scenes.

[but... PB Continues...]

... Only if a person falls in love with his soul as deeply as he has ever done with another person will he even stand a chance of finding it. Incessant yearning for the higher self, in a spirit of religious devotion, is one of the indispensable aspects of the fourfold integral quest. The note of yearning for this realization must sound through all his prayer and worship, concentration and meditation. ... A merely formal practice of meditation is quite insufficient although not quite useless. For without the yearning the advent of Grace is unlikely, and without Grace there can never be any realization of the Overself.

The factuality of Grace does not cancel out the need of moral choice and personal effort. It would be a great mistake to stamp human effort as useless in the quest and to proclaim human inability to achieve its own salvation as complete. For if it is true that Divine Grace alone can bring the quest to a successful terminus, it is likewise true that human effort must precede and thus invoke the descent of Grace.

Our initiative pushes on toward the goal, whilst divine Grace draws us to it. Both forces must combine if the process is to be completed and crowned with success. Yet that which originally made the goal attractive and inspired us with faith in it and thus gave rise to our efforts, was itself the Grace. In this sense Paul's words, "For by Grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves," become more intelligible. ...

... What is needed to call down Grace is, first, a humility that is utter and complete, deeply earnest and absolutely sincere, secondly, an offering of self to the Overself, a dedication of earthly being to spiritual essence, and, thirdly, a daily practice of devotional exercise. The practices will eventually yield experiences, the aspirations will eventually bring assistance....