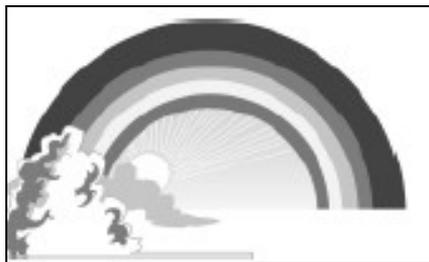


Journal on Personal and Spiritual Development



The Rainbow Journal

No. 44 – October 2011

Contents

FROM THE EDITOR.....	2
COOPERATION AND THE SILENT WARS	2
HOW GRATITUDE CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE	5
CONFRONTING GENDER PROBLEMS	7
THE WISDOM OF HARRY POTTER	9
CHRIST IN YOU – MIND AND ITS POSSIBILITIES	10
LAUGHTER THE BEST MEDICINE	11
OUR CLOSING THOUGHT	12

Journal of:

The Edgar Cayce Society of New Zealand

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Welcome to the 44th issue of the Rainbow Journal. The following article "Cooperation and the Silent Wars" was first published in the May 2007 issue of the Journal which was before the latest world financial crisis hit us. After four years of recession and high unemployment many are questioning our economic system which must have faults

that allows this to happen. The article therefore seems particularly relevant today.

Any contribution from readers to the Journal by way of comments, criticism or your own thoughts put down in writing would always be appreciated.
Brian Alderson ΩΩΩ

COOPERATION AND THE SILENT WARS

In the first Search for God Study group that met together in 1931 the opening subject that was discussed was cooperation. The cooperation studied by the group was of a spiritual nature and as such was defined as "losing sight of self and becoming a channel through which blessings may flow to others."

While most of the members of our modern society may not hold this high ideal of cooperation we all cooperate with each other in one form or another for mutual benefits and it is through this cooperation that we have created this world of today with all its technical wonders and material comforts. Consider for a moment the cooperation needed to erect a multi-storey skyscraper. Think about the number of people involved; the architects and planners, accountants, quantity surveyors, the drain layers, the truck drivers, the plumbers, electricians, carpenters, painters, plasterers, glaziers and clerks to name just a few all involved and working together to construct this edifice to stand tall possibly for centuries.

Reflect on the ease in which we can get hold of all our food and household goods by simply taking a trip to our local supermarket. Consider the cooperation needed to have all these goods which

come from all over the country - all over the *world* - assembled in this one place. The farmers, the fruit pickers, the butchers, transport workers, packers, the crews of ships, the food processors, the manufacturers of packaging and containers, the refrigeration engineers, cleaners, checkout operators, buyers, storemen, all working in cooperation so that we can acquire all our necessities of life with utmost ease just a short distance from where we live.

We can witness cooperation in all areas of our society; we cooperate to provide health and education, to provide entertainment and recreation, to maintain and develop the country's infrastructure, to provide our essential utilities such as water and electricity, to maintain law and order, social services, a safe environment and a democratic government.

With all the technological and material advances and benefits that have been made through our cooperating with each other we would expect a world in which we would be living in peace and harmony, in which at least all the basic needs of the world's population would be met just as they are for most of us in the Western world, but we know only too well that this is not the case. A great part

of the world's population does not have enough to eat. There are wars and internal strife in many countries. Even in our own country there is much violence, crime and conflict between various groups, between those that have much and those who have little. We are witness to the fact that much of our population is not happy, is under stress and ill through our style of living.

Why, then do these negative situations exist? One answer is in the 'silent wars' which pervade through the heart of our society. These silent wars are fought in opposition to cooperation. The wars originate from individuals, groups of people and corporations who put their own interests above the common good of our society and the reason why they do this is simply selfishness and greed. Their incomes, their sales and resulting profits and dividends are more important to them than the health, safety and well-being of their fellow men, the rest of society.

Take for example the food industry. One of the most serious health issues the developed world is currently facing is obesity caused on the whole by overeating and eating the wrong foods. Our health authorities do what they can to promote better eating habits but they have limited resources available to them which come from our taxes. On the other hand the manufacturers of these foods, which are the cause of the problem, rather than cooperate with the health authorities in limiting the negative effects of their products, promote the consumption of them in direct opposition to the efforts of the authorities. These manufacturers, who are often large multi-national companies, have vast resources available to them which can by far outmatch the resources of the health authorities so that in the

battle for the health of our people as against the sales and profits of these companies the companies are presently winning the war.

We see a similar situation with the constant barrage of advertising and promotion of patent drugs as against the encouragement of the use of natural fruits and vegetables for the long term maintenance of our health. The farmers producing these fruits and vegetables have few resources available to promote their crops while the drug manufacturers, being amongst the wealthiest companies in the world have enormous resources available for lobbying, advertising and promotion of their drugs which often have long term side effects damaging to our health. In the last few days it was announced that a major drug company had for years promoted a drug knowing full well that the side effects of these drugs were very harmful, but the incentive of massive profits far outweighed the drug manufacturer's concern for their customers.

Another matter of ever increasing concern in New Zealand, and apparently other countries in the developed world, is the escalating household debt caused principally by new mortgages for housing loans and the rising debts on credit cards. More and more housing loans are being granted as property prices reach record high levels and interest rates are on the increase. Economists have been warning that with rising interest rates and the likelihood that house prices are about to peak followed by a decline in prices many mortgagees will not be able to meet their debt repayments. Worse still as loans are being given at no or low deposits it is likely that in many cases the house prices will fall below the amounts owing on the mortgages so that not only

are the mortgagees going to face the possibility of losing their homes but could be saddled with a large debt as well. If the banks and other financial institutions worked in cooperation with the economists and treasury officials by being more prudent and conservative in their lending policies they could have helped to avoid the coming crises but the desire for profits above all else has resulted in them opposing attempts to reduce the levels of national indebtedness.

Perhaps the greatest challenge the world is facing is climate change brought about by the destruction of most of the world's forests and the pollution of our atmosphere from CO², much of which comes from the internal combustion engines in our motor vehicles. For decades our roads have become more and more cluttered with ever increasing numbers of vehicles using this fixed amount of roads to the point where the clogged roads are stifling our cities as each year we get closer and closer towards complete gridlock. Those in political power have known for decades about this problem and the environmental damage being caused and are aware of the solution, which is in turning to public transport rather than private cars. But because of the power of the vehicle manufacturers and the oil companies whose prime objective is to sell more of their products to produce profits for their shareholders the small efforts of our leaders are no match in the battle to win the hearts and minds of the people and to alter the course we are

heading.

For as He gave, "The heavens and the earth will pass away, but my word - and deed, and kindness and loving thought, patience, persistence in the right - do not pass away." They are the foundation stones upon which generations are built. They are the foundation stones upon which nations rise that seek to know God. These taken away make for those destructive forces that have arisen and do arise in the experience of nations when man has forsaken God and turned rather to a god of greed, a god of gold, a god of stone, a god of fame, a god of fortune. These fade and die, but the good deeds, the kindnesses, the gentle word remains forever. 1159-1

What can we, as individuals, do about these silent wars? Firstly we must follow our ideals - *"Others may do as they may, but for me and my house, we will serve the LIVING God."* Each of us must be *"one that is not unmindful of the fear, the doubt, that stalks abroad in the land at this particular period in the history of the land when greed, avarice, misunderstanding, has taken the judgement away from many and they struggle for that they know not what."* 333-1

And at this time of financial crisis we should insure that we live within our incomes and when we have savings these investments and savings go to companies that are motivated by more than just the bottom line, companies that work in cooperation with the best elements of our society. - BDA ΩΩΩ

HOW GRATITUDE CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE

If the only prayer you say in your life is 'thank you,' that would suffice. – Meister Eckhart

Gratitude means thankfulness, counting our blessings, noticing simple pleasures, and acknowledging everything that we receive. It means learning to live our life as if everything were a miracle, and being aware on a continuous basis of how much we've been given. Gratitude shifts our focus from what our life lacks to the abundance that is already present. In addition, behavioural and psychological research has shown the surprising life improvements that can stem from the practice of gratitude. Giving thanks makes people happier and more resilient, it strengthens relationships, it improves health, and it reduces stress.

Research Shows Gratitude Heightens Quality of Life

Two psychologists, Michael McCollough of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, and Robert Emmons of the University of California at Davis, wrote an article about an experiment they conducted on gratitude and its impact on well-being. The study split several hundred people into three different groups and all of the participants were asked to keep daily diaries. The first group kept a diary of the events that occurred during the day without being told specifically to write about either good or bad things; the second group was told to record their unpleasant experiences; and the last group was instructed to make a daily list of things for which they were grateful. The results of the study indicated that daily gratitude exercises resulted in higher reported levels of alertness, enthusiasm, determination, optimism,

and energy. In addition, those in the gratitude group experienced less depression and stress, were more likely to help others, exercised more regularly, and made greater progress toward achieving personal goals.

Dr. Emmons – who has been studying gratitude for almost ten years and is considered by many to be the world's leading authority on gratitude – is author of the book, "Thanks!: How the New Science of Gratitude Can Make You Happier". The information in this book is based on research involving thousands of people conducted by a number of different researchers around the world. One of the things these studies show is that practising gratitude can increase happiness levels by around 25%. This is significant, among other things, because just as there's a certain weight that feels natural to our body and which our body strives to maintain, our basic level of happiness is set at a predetermined point. If something bad happens to us during the day, our happiness can drop momentarily, but then it returns to its natural set-point. Likewise, if something positive happens to us, our level of happiness rises, and then it returns once again to our "happiness set-point". A practice of gratitude raises our "happiness set-point" so you can remain at a higher level of happiness regardless of outside circumstances.

In addition, Dr. Emmons' research shows that those who practice gratitude tend to be more creative, bounce back more quickly from adversity, have a stronger immune system, and have stronger social relationships than those who don't practice gratitude. He further points out that "To say we feel grateful is not to say that everything in our lives is necessarily great. It just means we are

aware of our blessings.”

Notice and Appreciate Each Day's Gifts

People tend to take for granted the good that is already present in their lives. There's a gratitude exercise that instructs that we should imagine losing some of the things that we take for granted, such as our home, our ability to see or hear, our ability to walk, or anything that currently gives you comfort. Then imagine getting each of these things back, one by one, and consider how grateful we would be for each and every one. In addition, we need to start finding joy in the small things instead of holding out for big achievements—such as getting the promotion, having a comfortable nest egg saved up, getting married, having the baby, and so on—before allowing oneself to feel gratitude and joy.

Another way to use giving thanks to appreciate life more fully is to use gratitude to help us put things in their proper perspective. When things don't go our way, remember that every difficulty carries within it the seeds of an equal or greater benefit. In the face of adversity ask oneself: “What's good about this?”, “What can I learn from this?”, and “How can I benefit from this?”

There are Many Ways to Practice Gratitude

A common method to develop the practice of gratitude is to keep a gratitude journal, a concept that was made famous by Sarah Ban Breathnach's book “Simple Abundance Journal of Gratitude”. This exercise basically consists of writing down every day a list of three to ten things for which we are grateful; we can do this first thing in the morning or before going to bed at night. Another exercise we can try is to write a gratitude letter to a person who has exerted a positive influence in our life but

whom we have not properly thanked. Some experts suggest that we set up a meeting with this person and read the letter to them face to face.

Last year millions of people took the challenge proposed by Will Bowen, a Kansas City minister, to go 21 days without complaining, criticizing, or gossiping. To help condition the participants to stop complaining, they each wore a purple No-Complaint wristband. Several authors in the self-improvement genre have suggested that people do something similar to help condition themselves to be constantly aware of the things in life that they're grateful for.

A variation of the wristband concept is to create a gratitude charm bracelet, with either one meaningful charm or different charms representing the things we're most grateful for. For example, we could have a charm shaped like a heart to symbolize our significant other, figurines to represent different family members, an apple to represent health, a dollar sign to symbolize abundance, a charm that represents our current profession or a future career, and maybe a charm that makes you laugh to represent humour and joy.

Conclusion

Once we become oriented toward looking for things to be grateful for, we will find that we begin to appreciate simple pleasures and things that we previously took for granted. Gratitude should not be just a reaction to getting what we want, but an all-the-time gratitude, the kind where we notice the little things and where we constantly look for the good even in unpleasant situations. Today, make a start to bring gratitude to our experiences, instead of waiting for a positive experience in order to feel grateful; in this way, we'll be on

CONFRONTING GENDER PROBLEMS

Most of us accept and embrace the bodies we have, although perhaps we would like to have a slimmer waistline and a few less wrinkles. Over the past few decades, in the sectarian Western world at least, the emancipation of woman has meant that women are now enjoying near equality with men. So nowadays few women would want to change their bodies to that of the opposite sex and vice versa – not many men would want to have the bodies of women.

For a long time science has known that our gender is determined at conception by the joining together of the x and y chromosomes. The genes carried in these chromosomes regulate all the differentiating male and female physical characteristics such as body size, body and facial hair and sex organs. In recent years scientists have been investigating the causes of behavioural differences between males and females. Although some of these differences may be accounted for by the environment, i.e., treating boys and girls differently, some of the gender traits become evident at a child's early age and must have other origins.

Most of us who have had both sons and daughters will confirm this. I noted my four year old granddaughter, when given pen and paper, will sit quietly and draw while my grandson of about the same age will stab the paper with the pen making as much noise as possible. When given a doll, many boys choose to use it as a hammer or weapon, whereas girls tend to feed and nurture the doll. This seems to confirm that there are behavioural differences between boys

and girls even when the environmental conditions are similar. Scientific studies suggest that some of these differences are accounted for by the variation in brain developments caused by the activity of male and female hormones.

However what is happening when a baby is born a boy yet grows up behaving as if it is a girl? In a recent TV 20/20 program there was a story entitled *'Boys Will be Girls'* looking at the subject of families struggling to do right by their children who have this problem. It looked at the journey of young persons who had the bodies of boys yet always considered themselves to be girls.

In the case of an American child interviewed at the time of the TV documentary, the child Jack, now Jackie, was ten years old and was about to undergo androgenic hormone treatment. During the interview Jackie stated that from as long as she could remember she considered herself to be a girl and displayed all the behavioural characteristics associated with girls. Jackie's father was the parent who had the most difficulty coming to terms with the situation, which is understandable as there is usually a special father/son relationship which would be absent in this case.

The German girl interviewed was a teenager, Kim Petras, who became the world's youngest person to undergo a transsexual operation at the age of sixteen. This popular pop singer - born Tim - is well known in Germany for having started hormone replacement

¹ <http://tvnz.co.nz/20-20-news/part-2-boys-girls-video-4404485>

therapy as part of her gender transition by the age of twelve. At sixteen, she completed gender reassignment surgery and now, two years later, feels completely at home in her readjusted female body.

The range of gender problems people are faced with is wide with transgenders being at one end of the spectrum and possibly transvestites at the other. The trauma associated with being a transgender can be life threatening, while on the other hand cross-dressers, those who have a fetish for dressing up in clothes of the opposite sex, generally live completely normal lives apart from this fetish.

In between these two extremes is quite a large group of people broadly termed 'homosexuals' – gays and lesbians. One of the most discriminated against and ostracised group of people in many societies who have to hide their condition or face persecution and sometimes death. In the Old Testament homosexual acts are described as 'an abomination' and those that commit these acts 'shall surely be put to death.' Some ignorant people even describe homosexuality as a disease which can be cured. Unfortunately most transgender children still live in the shadows, hiding from a world that sees them as freaks of nature. Rejected by their families, many grow up hating their bodies, and fall victim to high rates of depression, drug abuse, violence and suicide.

Even though we may accept that these gender problems are not diseases they beg the question – what is their cause? If we believe we only have one life on this earth we must assume that these problems are just the luck of the draw. If however we accept the metaphysics encased in the Edgar Cayce readings concerning reincarnation we are offered

a plausible, alternative explanation.

The readings state that we are sexless souls who have lived many lives on this earth, sometimes in the bodies of males and sometimes as females. It appears that we usually live a number of lifetimes as one sex until at some point we cross over to the other. It is not clear what brings about the switch but it seems that it is part of our journey of development to experience life on earth in the bodies of both sexes. It is suggested that if the cross over is rather sudden, or if we have had very strong characteristics of one gender at the time of the cross over, the characteristics of the gender we have just left may be carried over to the next life.

In the extreme case our subconscious minds have not accepted the physical change so we are unable to come to terms with the body in which we find ourselves. Our subconscious tells us that we are of a particular sex while our bodies are of the other and our behaviour reflects this conflict.

In the circumstances of homosexuality the subconscious mind has accepted the change of gender so that we generally display the behaviour of the sex of our bodies but when we come to puberty we find that we are still attracted to the sex that we were attracted to in our previous life, which is now the same sex as us.

Although there are names given to categorise various gender problems; transsexual, transgender, homosexual, transvestite, etc., a great deal of these problems appear to originate from the changing over from one gender to another between lifetimes on earth. Of course not all of these problems may be due to this cross-over between sexes and the readings suggest here are also other, karmic, causes however the concept

offers a theory, just like scientific theory, and, like scientific theory, can stand until such time as it is proven to be wrong.

Although we personally may not suffer from any of these gender problems most of us will encounter people who have them, perhaps people close to us, family members, or those we work and have dealings with. What is our attitude towards them and how do we judge and treat them? Given the knowledge as outlined in the Cayce readings and resulting understanding we no longer need to see their behaviour as 'abominations' as written in the Bible, nor are these people sick, freaks, diseased or needing a cure. These are simply people caught in the various stages of transition between the sexes.

Furthermore, the readings remind us that we are not to judge by appearances. We are inclined to look at people and see everything on the surface. We see one as beautiful while another ugly, yet each is a soul, the same essence in all of us only in different forms. What these people want more than anything else is to be judged and treated by who they really are – inside – and not by outward appearances.

FROM THE EDGAR CAYCE READINGS

Here, the complete analysis of an entity's being might be proof of those tenets (to those who would study such) that life is a continuous experience. And where one has met self in those activities having to do with the psychological (that is, the soul-self), as in this body, and also the physiological - or the physical body and its relationships to the spiritual or psychic body, as in this condition here, there is brought a homosexual disturbance that is to the body a mental and a physical condition to be met. 3364-1

But do not become a judge of others without knowing their environment and reaction, their lives. For if you would not be judged, then do not judge others. 1574-1

And judge not others, condemn not others. This is not love divine, neither is it wisdom. For it builds barriers, it destroys, it undermines the life of self first and then in the hearts and minds and experiences of others brings sorrow, disappointments, and those things that makes the hearts of men afraid. 262-104 ΩΩΩ

THE WISDOM OF HARRY POTTER

The other day I watched a re-run of the movie 'Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets' and was taken in by saying by one of the actors. I subsequently found the following wise excerpts from the J.K. Rowlings' Harry Potter books:

"It is our choices, Harry, that show us what we truly are, far more than our abilities." Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

"If you want to know what a man's

like, take a good look at how he treats his inferiors, not his equals." Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

"It takes much bravery to stand up to our enemies but we need as much bravery to stand up to our friends." Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

"To the well-organized mind, death is but the next great adventure." Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

"It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so

cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all - in which case, you fail by default.”

– J.K. Rowling

“Of course it is happening inside your head, Harry, but why on earth should that mean that it is not real?” *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*

“It matters not what someone is born, but what they grow to be.” *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

“We've all got both light and dark inside us. What matters is the part we choose to act on. That's who we really are.” *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

“Do not pity the dead, Harry. Pity the living, and, above all those who live without love.” *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*

“Numbing the pain for a while will

make it worse when you finally feel it.”

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

“We are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided.” *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

“We're all human, aren't we? Every human life is worth the same, and worth saving.” *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*

“It is the unknown we fear when we look upon death and darkness, nothing more.”

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

“It is my belief... that the truth is generally preferable to lies.” *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

“Dumbledore says people find it far easier to forgive others for being wrong than being right. *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* ΩΩΩ

CHRIST IN YOU

PART II

FOURTH LESSON

Personality

Humanity shrinks, and rightly so, from any thought of strangeness and loss, and any thought that occasions shrinking or pain should be quietly and peacefully dropped, without strife or resistance. I can tell you for a certainty that you will retain your personality just as long as you need it, and you will need it much longer yet. I am allowed to tell you that the meeting with your loved ones will be sweetly familiar, a great deal better than you can imagine, for they and you will be enriched by the love between you. Your loss is always gain. You can help them by your love and prayer, and they help you; think often of them. Bless them and become conscious of unity, which is a blessed reality. There is nothing untoward or strange; you are

here just what you have made yourselves, and they who love you would not have you with them until you have finished. In fact, you are near them now, but the veil or covering is over you at present.

Love – Love – Love. This is a potent force. It would not meet the demands of your present nature to arrive suddenly at the end of being, since everything in God's plan is in perfect order. There must be gradual enfoldment and gentle awakening; even after the spirit ceases to need its personal form, it can always resume it at will. Paul, who was allowed to enter the interior realms, tells you that the inner man is renewed day by day in an identity peculiarly your own, and exactly resembling you as you appeared, except that you have added the

spiritual qualities, refining and defining all the highest and best. This, too, is a covering or a resurrection body, and it is clothed in white raiment to appear before mortal eyes.

As your scriptures tell you repeatedly, the continuity of life is no more broken when the breath leaves the body than the continuity of child life broken by the incident of birth. It is the means by which life is liberated, becoming more intense. Memory exists, although we have learnt the power to dissolve into nothingness – this is true forgetfulness – all that is not of use. But I would have you know that you are greater than your form, that you have no limit, that you take limitations for purposes at present hidden from you, that true personality is not the fleshy form or a separate body, but, by reason of its greatness, is best manifested in part.

Paul, who had learnt the mystery, tells you that “the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body,” therefore it is quite clear that the body or form is only part of the great whole, the mystic body of Christ. Paul also had revealed to him the omnipresence of man, as he was present in spirit with the Church of Corinth while his body was visible in another place. Always bear in mind that to us there is neither time nor space.

I told you at the beginning that

your Scriptures could reveal the highest, and you will find more and more that we only present to you in a new light the truth that which was from the beginning, so you may see life from higher standpoints, with renewed vision, new hopes, and moving in loftier spheres of thought and experience.

Now you begin to see that the Lord Christ possesses the body of flesh, through which you choose to manifest; and there is no reason why it should not readily respond, unless you yield to the great enemy, the false belief in separateness. This enemy is symbolised in the story of the Garden of Eden, the separation from God. The lower self would become even as the gods, though in the words – “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is One Lord” – it was taught that we are one, that separate or outer forms never can finally overrule the one God. God requires perfection; therefore if we would rise to the consciousness we must begin with our lower self to bring it into obedience and subjection to the One Ruler; and as we do this we learn what our true personality is. We shall not accomplish this great purpose without constant watchfulness and wholeheartedness, giving all to gain all, ready at every turn to sacrifice the lower self, that we may become selfless and free. **ΩΩΩ**

LAUGHTER THE BEST MEDICINE

Many of us spend the first six days of the week sowing wild oats, then we go to church on Sunday and pray for a crop failure. - *Fred Allen*

Quit griping about your church; if it were perfect, you couldn't belong. - *Joseph P. Dooley*

I don't know why some people

change churches - what difference does it make which one you stay home from? - *Rev. Denny Brake*

If a Saviour leaves you as you are and where you are, from what has He saved you? - *Rev. Denny Brake*

Young man, the secret of my success is that at an early age I

discovered I was not God. -*Oliver set. - Rev. Denny Brake*
Wendell Holmes, Jr.

To err is human; to blame it on somebody else is even more human. -
John Nadeau

Some minds are like concrete, thoroughly mixed up and permanently

A pastor in trying to make the point that lack of communication is the major cause of divorce, got his thoughts mixed up and stated "marriage is the main cause of divorce." - *Cleveland Review* ΩΩΩ

OUR CLOSING THOUGHT

"What is it all about then? 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, your soul, your mind, your body, and your neighbour as yourself.' The rest of all the theories that may be concocted by man are nothing, if these are just lived. Love your neighbour as yourself in the associations day by day, preferring as

did the Christ who died on the cross rather than preferring the world be his without a struggle. Know, then, that as He had His cross, so have you. May you take it with a smile. You can, if you will let Him bear it with you. Do it!" 3976-29 ΩΩΩ

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