

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever felt that there is more to you than meets the eye—that something within you is *deeper*? Do you ever wonder how you seem to know things you have not been taught? Do you ever feel an association — a kinship — with someone you have just met and wonder why? Do you feel that you have little in common with people of other religions? Many of us have forgotten our primary nature as God’s children. The world has made it all too easy for us to forget that spiritual truth is the same for people of every religion and faith. *The Spiritual Philosophy of The Prodigal Soul* is the product of a long search to make spiritual sense out of a chaotic, seemingly unspiritual world. The good news is that the search has a great ending because we are more—a great deal more.

Opinions and views on religion, spirituality, and immortality are not hard to find, but for me, there was always something missing. Not all of the pieces of the spiritual puzzle seemed to fit. Reincarnation, with or without religious doctrine, did not answer all of my questions. Deeper exploration revealed yet more mysteries. The basic concept of reincarnation did make sense on an eternal level and potentially answered many ethereal questions. The idea of souls returning to earth seemed to bridge the gap between religious doctrine and spirituality revealed through experience. It became clear that there is a difference between organized religion and spirituality itself.

Over a ten-year period, Jesus visited me in dreams three times. These were remarkably different from the many other types of dreams experienced during my lifetime—extraordinarily different. During and after these particular three encounters with Jesus, a unique and profound sense

of peace was experienced, a spiritual peacefulness that defies adequate description. “The peace that passes understanding” or “the peace of heaven” as described in the Bible must be references to this pure and Holy experience. This sensation was so unique that it cannot be adequately expressed through language.

The feeling of unfettered peace was so deep and so complete that it manifested itself in my physical body. I could feel it swell within my soul as it permeated from the inside out. It was wonderful! My soul wanted nothing more than to be able to keep the sensation with me, not just to remember it, but to continue to feel it and never let it depart. In the midst of that profound experience, my world was perfectly complete. But that heavenly peace could not be contained or restrained. Even so, the physical response to that sacred contentment was so intense, so all encompassing, that it took *three full days* to dissipate. Little by little, hour by hour, it slowly slipped away. Like a beautiful perfume, the fragrance grew fainter and fainter... until it was no longer perceived. The indescribable peace did not cease to exist as it radiated out from me but, rather, was gradually returning to the place of its divine origin. The remaining memory could never do justice to the absolutely satisfying feeling of that heavenly, ultimate tranquility.

The knowledge of experiencing perfect peace was one of the most profound aspects of being in the presence of Jesus. Although unable to continue to feel it physically, the memory of the depth of the sensation has always remained strong.

Jesus spoke directly to me in all three dreams. We were alone as he stood near a large tree in a beautiful, natural setting. We were fairly close to each other, separated only by a shallow, clear stream just a few feet wide. As he spoke, I sat silent and motionless at the base of a large rock in

absolute awe of Jesus standing serenely before me. With eyes fixed upon him, my soul listened intently to every single word he uttered. Upon waking, there was the realization of having been with him and the overwhelming sensation of peacefulness.

Incredibly, not a single word Jesus had spoken to me was available to my conscious mind. Realizing the tremendous importance of his wisdom and words, my mind strained to recall them. My intellect failed to understand how it was possible to not remember what he said! Surely, those precious words must be available if I tried hard enough! But only that remarkably pristine peace remained.

How could I fail to recall what Jesus said to me?

Being unable to remember any of his words greatly bothered me for a long time—for years. After all, what was the point of those profound experiences if the messages remained hidden? Over time, it became less important to remember on a conscious level. There was no doubt that my *soul* had listened, had completely understood, and had remembered. The messages had been received on a level that was intended, and that level was a purely spiritual one.

It is significant to mention that as I approached the completion of this manuscript, the reason why the wonderful words of Jesus were hidden from my intellect was revealed to me. On one hand, being in the presence of Jesus took me far beyond faith alone, transforming faith into absolute knowledge that we are foremost, eternal, spiritual beings. On the other hand, the sharing of spiritual insights from those profound encounters still required an act of faith on my part. With the inability to quote Jesus

word for word, the writing of this book required trust in the intent of the experience and in my soul's ability to express it. Documenting this philosophy was an act of faith itself, an act that also resulted in continued personal spiritual growth. In fact, without the willingness to proceed, the reason for these extraordinary encounters may never have been fully realized. Not only would my soul have missed the bigger blessing as a result of taking that next step in faith, but also, there would have been nothing to share with other people.

During the same time period as the encounters, I spontaneously began to view Jesus in a new way, a way that altered his traditional relationship with all people, perceiving Jesus and humanity in a slightly different spiritual light. These perceptions excited me because they seemed to answer many rarely addressed questions. Eagerly, I began discussing these thoughts with a Christian friend of mine who, with eyebrows raised, cut me off and said, "That's blasphemy!" That immediate response was so shocking to me that I did not mention another word about the subject to anyone for about ten years. There is no desire in my heart to be responsible for leading anyone away from God! Although no longer Catholic as raised, my experiences had transformed me into a disciple who fully accepted the teachings of Jesus. I still do.

Even with the passage of time, the desire to discuss these ideas would not go away. The concepts continued to develop. Again, my soul felt compelled to share them. Cautiously, these views were introduced to individuals with different backgrounds. Their responses were amazingly open-minded, and people were very interested in exploring diverse theologies. Sharing what was in my heart seemed to be helpful, regardless of individual background or religious experience. In most cases, people were not only willing to discuss these concepts, but they

also exhibited a genuine spiritual hunger for more. A close friend with a Jewish background was surprised by the realization that my perspective provided so much common spiritual ground that the only thing separating us was religious tradition alone. This same friend encouraged me to write about the subject. My only hesitation was not being a scholar or professional clergy, to which my friend replied, "Neither was Jesus," and that response turned the tide on my decision to share this philosophy.

This basic spiritual perspective works very well in everyday life and offers guidance to live by spiritual design. My soul feels called to this writing and continually seeks divine guidance to please God by following His wonderful Will. I do not profess to be a prophet and desire only to share insight that is divinely inspired through my extraordinary interaction with Jesus. These convictions were not reached through books or other external sources. Certainly, these views were never taught to me within the confines of my religious indoctrination. They have come from the inside out, and not the other way around.

It seems to me that these basic spiritual principles contain a very positive message, one that could act as a unifying force in our religiously separatist world. It explores our relationship with God, with each other, and with Jesus in a non-traditional way. Furthermore, it reveals the spiritual connection of every child of God regardless of doctrine, culture, tradition, or affiliation.

If sharing these views holds potential for bringing people closer to God, a step closer to each other, or even help them consider their relationship with God, it can only be positive. *The Spiritual Philosophy of The Prodigal Soul* seeks to make spiritual sense out of worldly environments and experiences.

Just as an angel smilingly extends a hand to help us, we must extend our own to help each other along the passage home. Some may find the principles overstated, or even elementary. If you find it so, Bravo! For then, you have understood the tremendous power and the consequences of the use of your Free Will.

No one knows the mind of God, comprehends the full scope of creation, or even completely understands this physical existence. At best, we can only glimpse tiny, unconnected pieces of a gigantic puzzle far beyond our earthly grasp. Even so, as the children of God, it is our nature to try. In this light, *The Spiritual Philosophy of The Prodigal Soul* is offered.