
CHAPTER ELEVEN

CHANNELING AND CHRISTIANITY

We live in a Judeo-Christian culture, and new-age channels need to deal at some point with orthodox religion, as it does not hesitate to deal with you! I am a Christian because of living in the Christian world as well as in the new-age context. I have had, over a period of time, a fairly extensive personal odyssey which I share in part with you in the hopes that my observations may be helpful.

The conservative Christian viewpoint on channeling is that it is a Satanic practice designed to deceive sinners and cause them to fall deeper into sin. The fundamentalist remembers that one should not “suffer a witch to live” and considers anyone who exhibits channeling ability a false prophet. Despite repeated Biblical assurances that the Holy Spirit, a part of the Christed deity Itself, will be with us always, conservative Christians believe that inspired Christian writing began and ended with those works that are now collected into that document that is called the Holy Bible.

Consequently, when fundamental Christians attack you it is not because of what channeling is or because of what you are but because of what channeling is not, and what they feel you could never be. The experience of being chided by someone you know is a painful one. When the critic is someone you love, the pain increases. When you are feeling ambivalent yourself about Christianity and channeling you are in the worst of this kind of pain.

For what it is worth I will share with you my own version of mystical Christianity. It is not a complete telling of my beliefs for I have always tried to keep the factual content of my beliefs to a minimum. The purer and simpler the flame of my adoration burns the more acceptable do I find my own religious stance. So what I am sharing with you borders on the naive and simplistic. However, to a mystic there is often a lack of vivid complexity and detail, overmatched by the burst of pure feeling which such a bent of mind offers one.

I believe in a mystery. I believe in one God. I believe in one truth, one Logos, one consciousness in all of creation. I believe in that which is behind all which we have ever thought and everything we see. Many are the ways in which the world of facts and figures, of writing and calculating, is made available to us. However, no matter how many ways that you name, ratiocination offers us only ignorance of ultimate cause and so aids in the

discovery of mystery. There are no ultimate answers which the rational mind and all of its endeavors so far recorded in written history on this planet have offered to any of us.

It is logical to me that there is an ultimate and noumenal answer, source and Creator. I am unable to conceive of the creation's being as orderly as a timepiece and productive of so much beauty of thought, word, intention and deed and then to believe that there is no Creator. Therefore, I choose to worship the Creator that I cannot see and will never fully know in this life. I worship the mystery which I know is there.

It has been my observation in over forty years of incarnation that the universe is incredibly kind. We are such vulnerable creatures, yet somehow for every problem there seems, eventually, to be a solution. Thus I am given the clue that the nature of my Creator is a loving one and that its acts towards me have been supportive. Or, to put it another way, its acts towards the creation of which I am a part are supportive. The creation witnesses to the Creator's redemption. I am fascinated by the grandeur of all that there is and I seek to know the truth about it, knowing that every time I come closer to the mystery, the mystery will remove itself from me once again, so that no matter how much I learn about the Creator there will be an infinite amount more that I do not know. Behind all theological assertion and discussion is the unity in which I believe. Behind my religion or any other I see the same Creator.

I was born with the gift of faith, in my case the gift of love for Jesus Christ. With this amazingly powerful gift already mine it was up to me only to commit myself, as I advised each of you to do, to one carefully chosen way of living a life in faith. My choice of Christianity was logical and, of course, a sentimental favorite, from my point of view. If you have an attraction to Christianity, yet some things about it cause you to question your desire to declare yourself Christ's own, I urge you to begin talking with someone who is sympathetic both to Christianity and to your gifts.

I believe in the Christhood of Jesus of Nazareth. His achievement was to live up to his potential and to share it with others. He became part of the consciousness of the Creator of us all, in my belief. His consciousness was truly Christed. In addition to worshipping the Christ in Jesus I love the man about whom I have read. His words in the Bible command my respect, my obedience and my discipleship. Unlike the conservative Christian whose cry is "You can only serve one Lord," my assumption is that no matter what I do I am serving one Lord. I accept Jesus Christ as my personal savior. I

perceive the consciousness of Christ as being the articulated consciousness of Love. Love is the nature of the Creator, in my view, and signals to me the presence of redemption in every moment of experience, waiting only for us to celebrate it, turn to it, claim it and move onward from being redeemed from our humanity to redeeming any experience that we meet by our own ability to love and to channel the Creator's love. This is not to say that the things that we do are godlike, but that our actions may more and more be manifestations of a kind of channeling which a life lived in faith makes available to us.

I believe in one Spirit who offers gifts to us in our individual vibratory patterns. Regardless of how this is explained in various sects and religions I do believe in an immanent and creative Spirit which is a portion of the Creator and which is in a personal and potentially intimate relationship with each of us.

It is not as important to me to explain my faith as it is for me to live by faith. Consequently, although I read the Bible daily as part of my Christian practice and give substance to what men of inspiration and scholarly achievement can tell me about scripture, I assume that if it does not make sense to me it is because I am taking the words too narrowly or too literally, or have not lived long enough yet. Because spiritual matters revolve around mystery and infinite values, it is almost impossible for us to expect any rational understanding of faith, and yet the act of living by faith is one of the few available whole-hearted responses of a person of integrity to the realization that we do not know anything. Many facets of Jesus' life and ministry which are hard to believe because of extraneous detail can cogently be grasped as allegories. For instance, I am basically indifferent as to whether Mary was a virgin when she conceived Jesus. Historically, this is not an important part of my love for Jesus or my worship of the deity of God in Christ. Metaphorically, it is very important to me for understanding the birth of my own or anyone's spirit. Mary's act in accepting and celebrating what her Creator asked her to do was an act of pure faith, and so it is for all of us. Our first step in a life of faith is to believe. Mary had to nurture this over many months, "Pondering it in her heart." When our faith is new it must be protected as much as the child must be enwombed in order to live long enough to face the outside world. The birth of Christ, then, may fruitfully be seen as an allegory for the moments and months when your life in faith first comes in contact with a world which is quite often seemingly without faith. It is possible to work one's way through Old

and New Testament alike, seeing the infinite possibilities in understanding those things which are deeper than words.

I believe that we are all channels in one way or another. Over a period of years we look at ourselves, notice what things are easy for us and what things difficult. We begin to become aware of the gifts that we have, whether they seem small or great, and as our life proceeds we each decide how to offer our gifts. We ask two separate questions about our gifts. The first is, "What nourishes me?"; the second is, "How can I nourish others?" My answer to the first question is that a life in faith and Jesus Christ nourishes me. The answer to the second question is that I seem to be most helpful serving both within and outside of the established church. I have come to see my channeling not just as an advanced form of meditation, which I was satisfied to call it for years, but also as a kind of ministry offered as sincerely as any orthodox minister but, hopefully, without the weight of narrow judgment to burden my offering of inspiration which is intended to serve not just Christians or non-Christians but anyone who may need the particular information I am able to channel.

It seems only reasonable that a good new-age channel have an excellent chance of having a rather profound spiritual nature prior to becoming a channel. Many of the prophets of history have been religious veterans whose inspired channelings broke new ground for them and for the people that they served, even though they were rooted as persons in a life of faith in a traditional religion.

Views of God change. Perceptions of deity emerge, flourish and vanish. The Creator remains behind all that seems to flash across the stage of our experience, and for me to be channeling seemingly non-Christian spiritual material seems only logical. How could I channel more of what is in the Bible? No word can be taken from or added to that book. What is happening with channels now, I believe, is that because there is a tremendous thirst for spiritual food and drink and, further, because so many people have had bad experiences with the narrowness of orthodox religion, many people now look for inspiration in new-age channelings.

This does not mean that the new-age channelings are right and Christianity, Buddhism, Shintoism or any other-ism is wrong. One version, and then another, of creation's story has come before us. Each version of the truth eliminates some distortions peculiar to older systems of belief and creates new ones. Each re-telling of the way of the pilgrim is, for someone, the clearest path possible to a life in faith and, for others, a path blocked for one

reason or another. The function of a channel, as I see it, can be that of adding to the number of ways available to people who wish to work out their perceptions of deity and redemption.

All of the foregoing does not mean that I can take or leave Christianity. Knowing that the ultimate truth is not available to me is, in my mind, no excuse for withholding my faith from the best path that I can find to the Creator. For me, that best path is Christianity, which requires a personal and deeply felt commitment to Jesus Christ. Were I to take refuge in the ultimate view of truth I would certainly be wise, but my possession of a life in faith would be highly precarious. The life of a believer is a continual working out of the details of commitment and I recommend to your consideration all possible efforts to find out what you really think and feel about the Creator of your consciousness and your life so that you can choose your path if you have not already done so and clear your mind to give yourself wholeheartedly to the task of creating a faithful life.

Yes, it is possible to create a life of fidelity and honor, bowing to the ultimate truths of mystery and consciousness and neglecting to worship. But that seems dangerous to me because it is all too easy to get cocky when you feel that you are living a more enlightened life than others. One who acts as *if* he believed in order to reap the ethical and metaphysical benefits of a life in faith will not find himself or herself subject to the numerous and inevitable disciplines which recommend themselves to the active Christian, or the active participant in any religion. One may say that the lack of discipline is a freeing thing, yet I submit to you that in the living of a spiritual life a lack of discipline is a peculiarly killing fault.

If you are investigating any part of new-age spiritual teachings, and especially if you are already a psychic or functioning as a channel, and if you also wish to become or remain Christian, my advice to you is to find a minister who has sympathy for those involved in new-age teachings. I am a member of the Episcopal Church, the American branch of the Anglican communion of churches, sometimes called the Church of England. It has proven to be an extremely helpful way for me to worship because the Anglican Church, historically, fairly bristles with mystics and heterodox members. Its rituals are deeply and rigorously beautiful and magical, yet it is something of an intellectuals' church with a theology that understands the scope, ramifications and near-necessity of doubt. Every priest that I have had since I began my study of meditation and channeling in 1962 has been immediately or eventually supportive of and helpful to me. I have found a strong, caring willingness to hear what I am going through and to support

me in what I wish to offer spiritually. The most intense need that I have had of this comes in two parts: the Ra contact and challenges from other Christians.

The unusual circumstances of the Ra contact caused me to pay far more attention to its impact on my spiritual life and its acceptability to the church than I ever paid to any other contact that I have received. The Ra contact information was more specific and more organized and constituted a more nearly complete metaphysical system. Consequently, I was more concerned that my spiritual director read the material carefully and advise me of any spiritually sensed irregularity. My present priest has been most kind in reviewing my material and he continues to keep a wary eye on my activities, for which I am extremely grateful.

He has also been supportive of me when I have been distressed and concerned because of the negative comments of those who fear that I have strayed too far from orthodox Christianity to be considered fully a Christian. If you are an active channel, psychic or new-age person, these concerns will be as difficult for you to answer as they were for me without good counsel. As in any organization, no matter how sophisticated the theology, the church is only as good as the people in the church are on their weakest day. Therefore, it behooves you to choose not only the most appealing church theologically but also the most understanding congregation of ministers and people of that church within the denomination. I could, for instance, go to any number of churches within my diocese whose priests, though of the same faith as my own spiritual director, would be unable to relate to me in any way meaningful to both of us regarding my spiritual gifts.

If a priest is also a mystic he will not need to agree with your mysticism in order to be supportive of it, for he will recognize the living spirit that is also in him or her. If your minister, on the other hand, happens to be one who lives a spiritual life in its narrower sense, finding literal meanings rather than expanded ones for each of the events of the Christian story, then no matter what denomination the minister is in, he probably will not be able to aid you but will be uncomfortable around you. Consequently, if you wish to be both channel and Christian, choose your parish with the utmost care, for it is to one particular community of the body of Christ that you will be committing your faith, your life and your work.

Let me say a word or two about dealing with those who will accuse you of being Satanic. Firstly, do not, under any circumstances, defend yourself. It

does not become a pilgrim to be haughty and especially does it not become one who wishes to minister to others by offering the service of channeling. Assume that you will suffer for your faith and let it go at that. If it is important enough to you to remain Christian then it is well to approach the difficulties that you will have in remaining Christian in a Christian manner! Always accept the full measure of criticism and chastisement which your accuser wishes to level at you. If you can avoid listening to it without acting unkindly, by all means do so. But if you are in a situation where someone has your ear and that person chooses to accuse you because of your channeling, then hunker down and listen with compassion and patience. Regardless of any provocation, do not give any offense. Try not to insult people or their beliefs but rather turn your energy towards giving thanks for the caring and concern that caused the person to attempt to help—for that is what accusers think they are doing. Ask your accuser to pray for you. It will almost certainly help you, and it is a very healing thing to make yourself vulnerable to and trusting of someone who seems to be hurting you. Remember that your accuser is a Christian and is trying to live a Christian life just as you are.

If you are not a Christian and you are still concerned with a critic accusing you of being Satanic because that critic is a family member or friend whom you are not able to avoid, I would advise you to follow the directions of the previous paragraph even though you are not a Christian because there is nothing more fruitless than trying to argue with a person about his or her religious beliefs.

Perhaps the greatest caution that I would offer to those who have new-age gifts and desire a life of faith within the Christian church is that you do not need to do anything to “wake up the church.” Admittedly the church’s ways are a bit rusty and sometimes creak with age, but you will find that any way of practicing the presence of the consciousness of Love looks hide-bound to those who are not experiencing the consciousness of Love in your way. The Christian church is rich in scripture and inspired writing. I have no desire, personally, to add to the Bible for as a vehicle of faith it is wonderfully rich and if I studied every day until I died to my physical body in this life I could not possibly exhaust its helpful depths. It is not true that whereas the church is judgmental and high-toned, wordy or petty, lacking in freedom or Byzantine, new-age religions are free. Any faith confines one as it frees one. Live a life within what you know of new-age wisdom and you will find that you have created your own judgments, rituals, methods, limitations and complexities. Nor is it true that there is a fullness of worship in new-age

studies that any orthodox religion lacks. Among the functions of any religious organization are adoration of the Creator and service to humankind. We go to church and/or to meditation to worship and to serve others. We hope to worship with heart and mind wherever we go. As I understand my own religion, there is no fixed boundary between The Church and metaphysical philosophizing. Those who seek hardest in almost any religion can be found reading in many religions, seeking always to enlarge and enrich the view of the mystery which we carry with us and within us.

Within your church, especially if you are in any way responsible for sharing Christian life and worship with others, offer only what you can honestly give in an orthodox way. It is not fair to your church to attempt to bring into play concepts which do not fit comfortably within orthodox Christian doctrine. Of course, if someone asks you privately about a certain facet of the faith and you discover that that person is having difficulties along the same lines that you did when you had to face and blend together the difficulty between orthodox belief and what you yourself felt and experienced as true, then you may share your own path with another. But there is no need for you to complicate someone else's walk with Christ gratuitously.

Nor is there any need for you to attempt to bring those in your meditation group or those for whom you channel to Christ. You may certainly say that you are a Christian when it is relevant to the conversation and you will find that if you declare and witness to your own faith with simple brevity, many people will seek you out and ask you about the Christian walk. It is something that many Americans, anyway, want very much to be a part of because not going to church is, in a way, a separation from much that is good about American life. However, I do not believe in trying to change people, whether it is Christians who will not listen to new-age thinking or new-age metaphysicians who want nothing to do with orthodox Christianity. In either case, it is infringing on free will to offer ideas to people who are not asking to hear them.

A note, to keep myself and you honest. This book, and this chapter, are written "in the garden" of quiet contemplation and composition, and one might think that my walk with Christ never leaves Eden, since I seem to have no visible problems. But, like any intellectual, I am against my own better judgment, frequently gone far into the desert of despair, wandering lost until once again the voice of the Spirit breaks through to me and I am again aware of being redeemed. A life lived in faith does not guarantee what

the world thinks of as peace or happiness, nor do one's personality traits cease having disadvantages, if one lives magically. Further, please know that I do not presume to be any sort of Christian apologist, as I have no theological training and speak only as one who knows herself to be irreparably the least of those calling themselves Christian; in no way does my life actually represent my numerous ideals and intentions. Nevertheless, to align oneself with principles of ultimate worth is to greatly enrich, ennoble and simplify a life pattern.

If you wish to write me about Christianity and channeling and the problems that you are having, I would be glad to hear what you have to say and to respond to you.