

CHAPTER 8
Serve the Divine

DISCIPLINE NUMBER EIGHT

The noble warrior is dedicated to and relies upon the Divine in and for all things.



Lesson

For some, accepting the concept of God or the Divine as a higher authority comes naturally. There are those who readily connect with a higher power and feel comfort in doing so. For others this is a struggle, often because their experience with religious dogma or organized religion has been negative and even traumatizing for some. What may be called for is a dissipating of preconceived notions about the Divine, and allowing for a new picture. At the very essence of the Divine is nothing but love. If you can imagine love, clothed in wisdom, taking the form of the religious embodiment of your choosing, perhaps you can see just how important a connection to the Divine becomes to anyone and everyone. The warrior needs this connection to love, wisdom, the source of life itself. This connection is what brings meaning, direction, power, joy itself to the noble warrior.

Awareness of and allegiance to the Divine puts the “spirit” into “spiritual warrior”. You can’t be a spiritual warrior without some understanding of the spiritual realm. You can be a warrior, master the mind set, learn the discipline, polish the techniques, but your warriorship will remain on one plane--the natural plane. This is because it is the acknowledgment of the Divine which raises the warrior into the plane of the spiritual. It is the Divine for whom the spiritual warrior fights, combating destructive tendencies, selfishness, what some call “the hells” themselves. This spiritual battle is not fought for self but for a higher principle, for God, as you understand God.

Moreover, it is the Divine which gives aid to the warrior of the spirit. The Divine instills the mission, the hope, the faith, the power, the steadfastness, the guts, and gives the victory. In fact, among many spiritual philosophies, it is recognized that it is God who actually does the fighting against the powers of darkness in oneself. It is the Divine which breaks apart our false assumptions and delusions, who batters down our lusts and desires, who sets us free from fear, loathing, contempt, hatred, all transgressions and their accompanying misery. God fights through our own noble loves and aspirations, through our higher thoughts and consciousness, through our choices. So the young boy David, when he was fighting the giant Goliath, proclaimed, “You come to me with a sword with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand. . . . Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s, and He will give you into our hands” (I Samuel 17:45-47).

In spiritual warfare you can’t do it without divine aid. This is well know in all 12-step recovery programs, in all the major religious philosophies--a truth for all. To fight against our inward spiritual enemies without the help of the Divine is like an army trying to win a battle without a source of supply, weapons, ammunition, without leadership, without cause. The Divine offers meaning to the fight, and the means. The most important lesson which can be learned by the warrior who would become spiritual is the lesson of the Divine. It is all about the Divine.

In times of spiritual struggle, call upon God as you understand God. Ask for help, and see if you do not recognize the difference. For the new warrior who is not used to this approach, it may seem awkward at first. But keep it up. You will begin to sense the real presence of a Higher Power, and the comfort and aid that Higher Power can bring. You will begin to understand the importance of staying close to the Source of all things, and giving honor to the greatest and most noble Warrior-King.

Gems from the Masters

With God
All things are possible.

Mark 10:27

Have you not known?
Have you not heard?
The everlasting God, the Lord,
The Creator of the ends of the earth,
Neither faints nor is weary.
There is no searching of His understanding.
He gives power to the weak,
And to those who have no might
He increases strength.
Even the youths shall faint
and be weary,
And the young men shall utterly fall,
But those who wait upon the Lord
Shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings
like eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:28-31

I seek refuge in the Lord of Daybreak
From the mischief of His creation;
From the mischief of the night
When she spreads her darkness;
From the mischief of the envier,
When he envies. . . .
I seek refuge in the Lord of men,
The King of men,
The God of men,
From the mischief of the slinking prompter
Who whispers in the hearts of men;
From jinn and men.

Koran 113:1-114:6

To You, O Lord,
I lift up my soul.
O my God, I trust in You;
Let me not be ashamed;
Let not my enemies
Triumph over me.

Psalm 25:1,2

Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing frighten you;
All things are passing;
God never changes;
Patient endurance
Obtains all things;
Who God possess
In nothing is wanting;
God alone suffices.

Teresa of Avila

To prepare yourself to receive God
And become one with him,
You must live within Divine order,
And the laws of order
Are all the commandments of God.
You can only become one with God
Through love and loving actions,
Love being essential spiritual connection.

Swedenborg

I go for refuge to God
Who is One
in the silence of Eternity,
Pure radiance of beauty
and perfection,
In whom we find our peace.
He is the bridge supreme
which leads to immortality,
And the Spirit of fire
which burns the dross of lower life.

Svetesvatara Upanishad

O light-bringer of my blindness,
O spirit never far removed!
Ever when the hour of travail deepens,
Thou art near;
Set in my soul like jewels bright
Thy words of holy meaning,
Till death with gentle hand shall lead me
to the Presence I have loved--
My torch in darkness here,
My joy eternal there.

Helen Keller

Questions for Personal Reflection and Discussion

What are your biggest barriers to feeling connected to God?

If you could sit down with God and ask one question, what would it be?

If you asked God that question, what do you believe God's answer would be?



Meditation

This meditation will be about connecting with the Divine as you understand the Divine. In this case you will approach the Divine as a child approaching a loving parent. Let yourself relax. Feel the tension on your body and give those areas that are especially tense permission to relax. Take a few deep, restful breaths. As you are beginning to relax, imagine that you are a child again, but in that child is all the experience, pain, growth, memories you have assumed as an adult. Let your innocence shine through and around you. Get in touch with that child. Feel the innocence, the joy and the pain, the fear and the wonder. See a group of happy children walking toward you, they are returning from being with someone special, because you can see that they are beaming with delight. They smile at you and point straight ahead of you, as if to beckon you to go forward to where they have been. As a child, you smile back at them and then look to where they are pointing. There you see a person sitting on a very ornate wooden bench. The person smiles at you and invites you to come and sit down. As you approach you recognize that this is no ordinary person. The person's face shines bright, and the love that seems to radiate from this person is something you have never experienced before. You feel completely safe, and looking into this person's face you feel you have known this person for all of your life. You recognize that this is the Divine in human form, your spiritual parent and guardian. You are not afraid, but on the contrary, feel that childlike wonder and delight building within you. This parent/guardian reaches out hands to pick you up, like an old grandparent. You step forward and feel your tiny body being lifted and cradled by warm and loving arms. Closing your eyes you feel completely at home in this warmth, as if you have found your way home. You want to stay there forever. Opening your eyes you see that the person holding you is tearful, and you know that these are tears of joy. You sense how much this person has longed to hold you and protect you, and how much this person loves you. You smile and close your eyes again. And you hear a voice, and gentle as a breath, as quiet as still water, speaking inside your soul. "Wherever you go, I will be there. And even though you may not always be aware of it, my arms will hold you and protect you. I will always love you." With that thought in mind, you bring that feeling back to the room with you now. And as you awaken and open your eyes, you will remember that any time you need to feel comfort and warmth of those arms, you can close your eyes and sense that they are there.



Process

Get a piece of paper and a pencil. Take some time to think about what kind of pledge you can make to the Divine. Perhaps it is to live with love and integrity, perhaps to protect the innocent. What is the universe calling you to do, as a warrior? Write it down in the form of a pledge. I pledge to.... Procure a staff of some kind, even the branch of a tree. Better, if you can get your hands on a sword, use a sword. Light a candle. Let this be a symbol for you of the Divine light. Stand before the candle. Hold the staff or sword with both hands vertically in front of you, so that it points up to the sky. Give your pledge. If you desire, you may use the following pledge:

I pledge my mind, heart, and life to the Divine Cause of love.
I pledge to live in love, by love and for love.
I pledge to seek after wisdom and to walk in integrity.
I pledge to battle the enemies of my spiritual life within,
To turn away from what is evil and do what is good,
And to help others as an ally in their struggles for a better life.
I will defend the defenseless, and uphold the common good.
I will lay down my life for this greater cause if necessary.
I acknowledge that all my power comes from within and above.
Without this help I can do nothing.
With this help, the possibilities for goodness in my life are immeasurable.



What are your closing thoughts about Serving the Divine?

End this lesson with a prayer.

