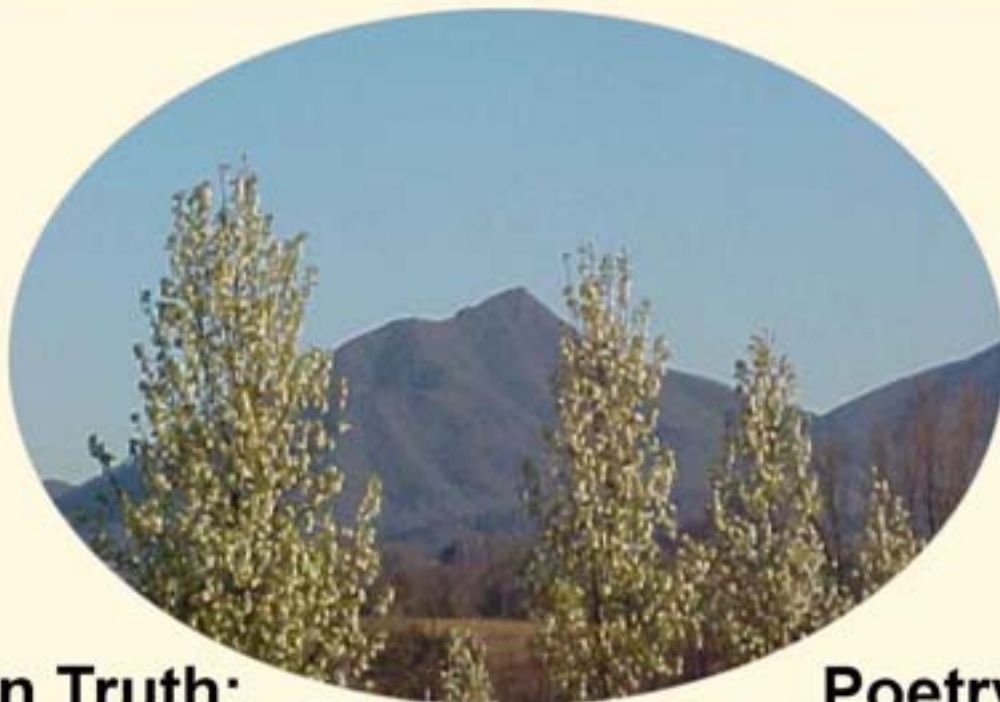


# Spirituality & Community

May 2004

[www.spiritualityandcommunity.com](http://www.spiritualityandcommunity.com)

**William Wordsworth: Intimations of Immortality**



## **On Truth:**

The Power of Truth  
By Kurt Venables

The Truth *Within* the Process  
By Tracy Phernetton

## **Poetry**

An Eternal Blessing  
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# Who We Are

[www.spiritualityandcommunity.com](http://www.spiritualityandcommunity.com)

## Origins

Spirituality & Community was founded in late 2003 by Kurt Venables to communicate with others who share an interest in spirituality and an appreciation for a diversity of spiritual beliefs.

## Mission

*We are dedicated to the spiritual development of our members and promoting spirituality and appreciation for the rich array of spiritual beliefs the world provides.*

## Foundations

*Spirituality & Community is a magazine and online community for those seeking answers to life's deepest questions. We hold closely these fundamental truths:*

- To find true happiness, one must open his or her heart to the pure goodness that lies deep within. We call this pure goodness the Good, the Light, and the Lord within.*
- The process of opening one's heart is a lifelong journey, which we call Spirituality.*

We distinguish between spirituality and religion. *Our focus is spirituality, which we view as an inner search for happiness and fulfillment.* We are concerned with what lies within the heart. In religion, metaphysical and supernatural concepts are inextricably linked to spirituality, and you will find such religious concepts discussed here to the extent that the writer believes them to be entwined with spiritual topics. However, you will not find material written for the sole purpose of asserting, denying, or debating supernatural religious phenomena, whether they be associated with traditional religions or new age religions. Examples of such phenomena might include the existence of God, reincarnation, or extraterrestrials. It's not that we don't consider these to be worthy subjects; it's just that we believe that spirituality, the inner journey, is important in its own right, and that is our focus here.

*We believe that true spiritual development depends upon a genuine appreciation for a diversity of spiritual beliefs.* Among our highest values is open-mindedness. We do not require or expect others to accept the particular beliefs of any one of us. We believe that as we develop such an appreciation for diversity, our perspective shifts away from an "all or nothing" concept of spirituality, an approach that supposes that one must either wholly accept or utterly reject a particular set of spiritual beliefs. This perceptual shift allows us to view the beliefs of others from a fresh vantage point, take from each set of beliefs that which rings true, and synthesize a personal spirituality that makes sense for each of us. *We believe that spirituality may best be defined as a personal journey towards true happiness and spiritual fulfillment and that the beliefs of others serve to guide each of us on our own journey.* Our goals are the personal

growth of each and every member and the promotion of spiritual values and respect for individuality.

We believe that when we view the spiritual beliefs of others with our hearts, we see truth shine through. Truth shines all around us if we know how to see it. The truth we see in the spiritual beliefs of others guides each of us. It is in this vein that we wish this organization to be viewed. ***Through Spirituality & Community, we reveal our most intimate beliefs. We sincerely hope that some will find some truth within them, and we wish you only the best on your own personal journey!***

## **What We Do- Opportunities for Exploring Spirituality and Communication**

*Spirituality & Community produces a magazine and encompasses an online community. Both aspects serve as the basis for bringing together those who share our aspirations and beliefs, to meet each other and exchange ideas.* We provide many opportunities for exploring spirituality and communicating with others:

- Spirituality & Community magazine***
- Features on the site***
- Online chats***
- Retreats*** (as interest arises)

The magazine is based on a Reader's Digest® type model. It is comprised primarily of reader submitted material. It is the primary mechanism for a member to both explore spirituality and communicate his or her ideas to others. Features from the past several issues are also posted on the site. When interest is sufficiently high, we will hold chats online. An eventual goal is to organize retreats in major metropolitan areas to allow participants to meet each other and discuss issues face to face.

Membership in Spirituality & Community is free and may be withdrawn at any time. The magazine is also free. Level of participation in any aspect of Spirituality & Community is strictly voluntary.

The organization and site were launched only very recently. Currently, membership is very small- We are in growth mode right now. ***If you would like to join, please visit our web site and click the Join Us! link.***

# Dalai Lama

His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet

## Speech after Receiving the Nobel Peace Prize

(excerpt)

His Holiness the Dalai Lama delivered this speech in Oslo, Norway on December 11, 1989, the day after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize:

Brothers and Sisters, it is an honor and pleasure to be among you today. I am really happy to see so many old friends who have come from different corners of the world, and to make new friends, whom I hope to meet again in the future. When I meet people in different parts of the world, I am always reminded that we are all basically alike: we are all human beings. Maybe we have different clothes, our skin is of a different color, or we speak different languages. That is on the surface. But basically, we are the same human beings. That is what binds us to each other. That is what makes it possible for us to understand each other and to develop friendship and closeness.

Thinking over what I might say today, I decided to share with you some of my thoughts concerning the common problems all of us face as members of the human family. Because we all share this small planet earth, we have to learn to live in harmony and peace with each other and with nature. That is not just a dream, but a necessity.

We are dependent on each other in so many ways that we can no longer live in isolated communities and ignore what is happening outside those communities. We need to help each other when we have difficulties, and we must share the good fortune that we enjoy. I speak to you as just another human being; as a simple monk. If you find what I say useful, then I hope you will try to practice it.

I also wish to share with you today my feelings concerning the plight and aspirations of the people of Tibet. The Nobel Prize is a prize they well deserve for their courage and unfailing determination during the last forty years of foreign occupation. As a free spokesman for my captive countrymen and women, I feel it is my duty to speak out on their behalf. I speak without a feeling of anger or hatred towards those who are responsible for the immense suffering of our people and the destruction of our land, home and culture. They too are human beings who struggle to find happiness and deserve our compassion. I speak to inform you of the sad situation in my country today and of the aspirations of my people, because in our struggle for freedom, truth is the only weapon we possess.

The realization that we are all basically the same human beings, who seek happiness and try to avoid suffering is very helpful in developing a sense of brotherhood and sisterhood; a warm feeling of love and compassion for others. This, in turn, is essential if we are to



(Ragu Rai/Magnum Photos, 1987)

*Inner peace is the key: if you have inner peace, the external problems do not affect your deep sense of peace and tranquility. . . . Without this inner peace, no matter how comfortable your life is materially, you may still be worried, disturbed or unhappy because of circumstances.*

survive in the ever-shrinking world we live in. For if we each selfishly pursue only what we believe to be in our own interest, without caring about the needs of others, we not only may end up harming others but also ourselves. This fact has become very clear during the course of this century. We know that to wage a nuclear war today, for example, would be a form of suicide; or that by polluting the air or the oceans, in order to achieve some short-term benefit, we are destroying the very basis for our survival. As individuals and nations becoming increasingly interdependent, therefore, we have no other choice than to develop what I call a sense of universal responsibility.

Today, we are truly a global family. What happens in one part of the world may affect us all. This, of course, is not only true of the negative things that happen, but is equally valid for the positive developments. We not only know what happens elsewhere, thanks to the extraordinary modern communications technology, we are also directly affected by events that occur far away. We feel a sense of sadness when children are starving in Eastern Africa. Similarly, we feel a sense of joy when a family is reunited after decades of separation by the Berlin Wall. Our crops and livestock are contaminated and our health and livelihood threatened when a nuclear accident happens miles away in another country. Our own security is enhanced when peace breaks out between warring parties in other continents.

But war or peace; the destruction or the protection of nature; the violation or promotion of human rights and democratic freedoms; poverty or material well-being; the lack of moral and spiritual values or their existence and development; and the breakdown or development of human understanding, are not isolated phenomena that can be analyzed and tackled independently of one another. In fact, they are very much interrelated at all levels and need to be approached with that understanding.

Peace, in the sense of the absence of war, is of little value to someone who is dying of hunger or cold. It will not remove the pain of torture inflicted on a prisoner of conscience. It does not comfort those who have lost their loved ones in floods caused by senseless deforestation in a neighboring country. Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free. True peace with oneself and with the world around us can only be achieved through the development of mental peace. The other phenomena mentioned above are similarly interrelated. Thus, for example, we see that a clean environment, wealth or democracy mean little in the face of war, especially nuclear war, and that material development is not sufficient to ensure human happiness.

Material progress is of course important for human advancement. In Tibet, we paid much to little attention to technological and economic development, and today we realize that this was a mistake. At the same time, material development without spiritual development can also cause serious problems. In some countries too much attention is paid to external things and very little importance is given to inner development. I believe both are important and must be developed side by side so as to achieve a good balance between them. Tibetans are always described by foreign visitors as being a happy, jovial people. This is part of our national character, formed by cultural and religious values that stress the importance of mental peace through the generation of love and kindness to all other living sentient beings, both human and animal. Inner peace is the key: if you have inner peace, the external problems do not affect your deep sense of peace and tranquility. In that state of mind you can deal with situations with calmness and reason, while keeping your inner

happiness. This is very important. Without this inner peace, no matter how comfortable your life is materially, you may still be worried, disturbed or unhappy because of circumstances.

Clearly, it is of great importance, therefore, to understand the interrelationship among these and other phenomena to approach and attempt to solve problems in a balanced way that takes these different aspects into consideration. Of course it is not easy. But it is of little benefit to try to solve one problem if doing so creates an equally serious new one. So really we have no alternative: we must develop a sense of universal responsibility not only in the geographic sense, but also in respect to the different issues that confront our planet.

Responsibility does not only lie with the leaders of our countries or with those who have been appointed or elected to do a particular job. It lies with each of us individually. Peace, for example, starts within each one of us. When we have inner peace, we can be at peace with those around us. When our community is in a state of peace, it can share that peace with neighboring communities, and so on. When we feel love and kindness towards others, it not only makes others feel loved and cared for, but it helps us also to develop inner happiness and peace. And there are ways in which we can consciously work to develop feelings of love and kindness. For some of us, the most effective way to do so is through religious practice. For others it may be non-religious practices. What is important is that we each make a sincere effort to take our responsibility for each other and for the natural environment we live in seriously.

I am very encouraged by the developments which are taking place around us. After the young people of many countries, particularly in northern Europe, have repeatedly called for an end to the dangerous destruction of the environment which was being conducted in the name of economic development, the world's political leaders are now starting to take meaningful steps to address this problem. The report to the United Nations Secretary General by the World Commission on the Environment and Development (the Brundtland report) was an important step in educating governments on the urgency of the issue. Serious efforts to bring peace to war-torn zones and to implement the right to self-determination of some peoples have resulted in the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the establishment of independent Namibia. Through persistent non-violent popular efforts dramatic changes, bringing many countries closer to real democracy, have occurred in many places, from Manila in the Philippines to Berlin in East Germany. With the Cold War era apparently drawing to a close, people everywhere live with renewed hope. Sadly, the courageous efforts of the Chinese people to bring similar change to their country was brutally crushed last June. But their efforts too are a source of hope. The military might has not extinguished the desire for freedom and the determination of the Chinese people to achieve it. I particularly admire the fact that these young people who have been taught that 'power flows from the barrel of the gun,' chose, instead, to use non-violence as their weapon.

What these positive changes indicate is that reason, courage, determination, and the inextinguishable desire for freedom, can ultimately win. In the struggle between forces of war, violence and oppression on the one hand, and peace, reason and freedom in the other, the latter are gaining the upper hand. This realization fills us Tibetans with hope that some day we too will once again be free.

The awarding of the Nobel Prize to me, a simple monk from far away Tibet, here in Norway, also fills us Tibetans with hope. It means that, despite the fact that we have not drawn attention to our plight by means of violence, we have not been forgotten. It also means

that the values we cherish, in particular our respect for all forms of life and the belief in the power of truth, are today recognized and encouraged. It is also a tribute to my mentor, Mahatma Gandhi, whose example is an indication that this sense of universal responsibility is developing. I am deeply touched by the sincere concern shown by so many people in this part of the world for the suffering of the people of Tibet. That is a source of hope not only for us Tibetans, but for all oppressed peoples.

. . .

Let me end with a personal note of thanks to all of you and our friends who are not here today. The concern and support which you have expressed for the plight of the Tibetans has touched us all greatly, and continues to give us courage to struggle for freedom and justice; not through the use of arms, but with the powerful weapons of truth and determination. I know that I speak on behalf of all the people of Tibet when I thank you and ask you not to forget Tibet at this critical time in our country's history. We too hope to contribute to the development of a more peaceful, more humane and more beautiful world. A future free Tibet will seek to help those in need throughout the world, to protect nature, and to promote peace. I believe that our Tibetan ability to combine spiritual qualities with a realistic and practical attitude enables us to make a special contribution, in however modest a way. This is my hope and prayer.

In conclusion, let me share with you a short prayer which gives me great inspiration and determination:

For as long as space endure,  
And for as long as living beings remain,  
Until then may I, too, abide  
To dispel the misery of the world.

Thank you

For the entire text of this speech or more information on the Dalai Lama and Tibet, please visit: [www.dalailama.com](http://www.dalailama.com).

# Spiritual Soup

By Kurt Venables

## The Power of Truth



I have described spirituality as a search for truth accompanied by spiritual action (actively changing feelings). This is the spiritual process, and learning the process is perhaps even more important than the substantive discoveries to be made on the journey. As the saying goes, “Give a man a fish, and he will have a meal; teach a man to fish, . . .” This truism underscores the overriding importance of developing skills related to the process of acquisition. Here, I present further detail regarding my views on the first aspect of the spiritual process- the search for truth.

First, for a person to begin and successfully continue the search for spiritual truth, he or she must understand the power that truth can have in his or her life. Technologically, we are all familiar with the wonders that the application of scientific knowledge has wrought in our lives. The same is possible for spiritual truth, which is knowledge of our subjective world, knowledge of our mind and hearts (as opposed to scientific knowledge of the objective world around us). Applying spiritual knowledge to our lives can bring great happiness. Ultimately, spiritual knowledge has even greater potential to bring true happiness than scientific knowledge. It’s just that in our culture spiritual knowledge is underappreciated and underutilized.

Secondly, open-mindedness is absolutely fundamental to a credible search for knowledge. Those who think they already have all the answers will unfortunately never

*“Humility is the key to spirituality ... arrogance is a lie, and the worst lies are the ones you tell yourself.”*

learn the important things in life and are doomed to repeat their mistakes. This characteristic is common. We call such people “Know it alls.” I’ll bet you know one or two. In truth, most people have, or at one time have had, at least some “Know it all” in them. This is no crime, but to make spiritual progress, this limitation must absolutely be overcome.

One factor contributing to “Know it all” syndrome is that it feels good to believe that you have all the answers, that you fully understand your world, because it imparts a sense of security. This aspect is actually easier to overcome than the next I will mention. Here, one must come to realize that understanding your world is a continuing process and that omniscient self-deceptions only subvert the endeavor.

The most pernicious piece of mental gymnastics surrounding this subject is arrogance. Here is my view of arrogance: I believe that people have an innate concept of social hierarchy that arises in selfish environments. An innate concept of equality pervades in loving environments, but the selfish see hierarchy in social

situations. The thought process of arrogance is that some characteristic valued by society (intelligence, athleticism, attractiveness, etc.) makes a person “better” than others without this attribute, entitling the “better” person to a higher social status and a greater share of resources. Thus, arrogance yields a justification for selfishness. Of course, no one is “better” than another. In order to support the belief that they are better, the arrogant frequently engage in sometimes elaborate self-deception, exaggerating their good qualities and minimizing the good qualities of those around them. Apart from being highly destructive from a social standpoint, self-deception is poison to any credible search for self-knowledge. The whole point of spirituality is to identify weaknesses, obstacles to happiness, and overcome them. Since admitting limitations is anathema to maintaining arrogant self-delusions, arrogance is completely inconsistent with spiritual progress. The bottom line is this: ***Humility is the key to spirituality.***

From a broader perspective, ***the truth is the truth- it is not a question of what you want to believe.*** Spiritual truth is a form of knowledge, and knowledge consists of

generalizations, inductive insights, based upon observations. In spirituality, the subject of the observations and insights is the mind and heart. This does not reduce the necessity for knowledge to be consistent with and supported by introspective observation. Arrogance is self-serving deception; it is not supported by observation. Everyone needs others; no one can stand apart from others. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses; diversity is what makes a group strong. In addition, arrogance is inconsistent with feelings of love, which are essential for true happiness. In short, arrogance is a lie, and ***the worst lies are the ones you tell yourself.*** I liken building a world view based upon self-serving delusion to building a house entirely of glass: It is utterly transparent to those on the outside. Because the harsh winds of change in life frequently throw up objects that chip and break the panes, it requires a lot of maintenance to keep up. In the most unfortunate circumstances, when subjected to extreme harshness, it will shatter and fall.

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# Remember Who You Really Are

By: Tracy Phernetton

## The Truth *Within* The Process

Together we are here, now, in harmony. All our souls connecting in one spontaneous arrangement of individual flavors. Now, more importantly than ever, we must immerse ourselves in our quiet heart-spaces. The galaxies of yester-now's our communing together to fulfill our true destiny. To fully Remember the Truth. So what you ask, is the Truth?

So many pieces, so many players, and we all have such grand ideas, opinions, aspirations, desires, and unique contributions. So who is the one carrying the Truth? Which player has the best ingredients for Truth? The answer is none, but yet in the same breath, the answer is also ALL. The awakening that I am having today is that it is not our opinions, nor ideas that make our Truths. The concept that has surfaced in my consciousness is that our individual Process is the answer we are searching for. Truth is mine, and Truth is yours. But in no way, shape or form is my Truth "better" or even "wiser" than yours. And now with our brows raising at the thought of a new perception, let us evaluate what The Process is.

This last month and a half has been one of those transitional-awakening periods. Much of us are *moving through* the old thought patterns, and old belief systems quite rapidly. *Moving through...*let us look at this phrase. Moving in Webster's dictionary means: change place or position, advance. And the description of movement is: act or *process* of moving. Now we hear those kind of semantics very often in this "New Age" or "Age of Aquarius" type of settings. How much do you hear, "Yes, you will feel very confused, and down, but this is good, you are releasing the old", "Just follow your heart" or "We are all moving through a huge shift right now." There is nothing "wrong" or "incorrect" with these statements. Really it is the exact opposite; they are so accurate, that I don't even think at times we fully can digest how it is not just some fancy comment, it is absolute Reality. So once again, looking at moving



***"With my personal pains ... I have felt the agony of destruction and know there is nothing you could tell me that would "shock" me. My life lived has given me my ability to transcend judgments, to let them go for the most part and see the light in every single person, no matter what."***

through, I see my own personal experience over the last month and a half, and I would now call it, as I view it from the position of glancing back, and I would say it has been my Process. Process in the dictionary is: projecting growth. (Interesting...)

Now, how many times have you wanted so badly to "fix" your friend because what you saw them doing "worried" you. Really, look at it. Your son, daughter, mom, dad, ex-lover, employer. Whoever they were, you worried because something in their "Process" worried you. How does that help relieve the pain of your own process? It feels like it helps, I know. Anything we can do to take the focus off of our own process. But it is only temporary. Why? Because within every process there is a purpose, and a new birth of some sort. So when you watch your friend, lover, mother, etc. rise above their pains, confusions, insecurities, and not only rise above it, but become more powerful because of it, then the question begs to be asked, What the hell were you wasting your time worrying about that person for?

I look farther back at my episodes of fear, when I was still stuck in insecurities and needed a man to love me, so I could love myself. I thought about this for a moment. I was

going deep into thought, as I often do, and I had this moment of clarity ( I love those). Then it hit me, if I hadn't made that choice out of fear with that man, I wouldn't have the beautiful, awe-inspiring son that I have in my life today. So what does that mean, I thought to myself, and then I said it out loud to a friend, and his response was, "So fear serves us too...hmmmm..." It definitely got me thinking. So I glanced over my past, and all my so-called mistakes, and poor choices, and you know what? They are all perfect and part of my fulfillment in the Re-remembering of who I really am. My process is my Truth. That is simple. That is easy. Even though when we are "in" the process, it is harder to see it as a gift. But that can become easier, with our new awareness.

One of the biggest poisons in humans is the disease of Judgment. What we do not understand, we fear, and therefore we judge. The most revolutionary idea and belief is to drop ALL judgments. So many see their fellow lightworkers, and see chaos, discontent, and mistakes, and they are forgetting to see past the surface level. They are then missing the gift, I believe. If we only see exterior acts, and then judge them based on our old thoughts/beliefs/fears then what is really going on? Make a commitment to your Self, to move pass the surface, and see the Truth. The Truth is everywhere, inside everyone, and even playing out it every thought/word/deed. It is my Process that has brought me to this moment, and I can reach inside and pull out any of the tools I have gathered along the way. My many different experiences, such as my personal battle with addiction and alcoholism, has given me my compassion for others. With my personal pains within the addiction, from lying to stealing, from driving drunk to attempting suicide, I can honestly look in the faces of others today and know I have experienced my hell, I have felt the agony of destruction and know there is nothing you could tell me that would "shock" me. My life lived has given me my ability to transcend judgments, to let them go for the most part and see the light in every single person, no matter what.

Now if you would agree to believe that my active addiction was my Process, then what can you see differently around you right now? Look at the judgments you are holding now. See them, and let them go, or just attempt to see through them. Look at others around you in your life today. They are here with you on this journey for a specific reason, maybe you know, maybe you don't. If you are carrying any judgments with you that keep you from seeing the truth in your outer world, look again. I challenge you to stop assuming and judging the surface levels, but please also put an end to the labels. Why do we limit our potential? Structure is for the people who are afraid of not having control. If I can sit here and honestly say that my "conflicted" past can bring me to such a blessing, then maybe we can re-evaluate our judgments/fears/worries of the others around us. They are living within The process, and guess what, so are you. So really, by focusing on others, you may miss your own opportunities that you are creating with your Self.

So the answer to the original question is: My process is Truth and your Process is Truth, and it is equal in an individuated experience, that's all. But we must love our own to love each other's. Today, I can honestly say that I love all of you, all of your experiences, and most of all, your Process. And this is only because I have finally re-remembered that no matter what my Process is, it is part of my full remembrance, and I really love that.

Tracy Phernetton is the founder of ALL PRODUCTIONS and is currently co-producing a documentary titled, "You Said You Want a Revolution..." She continues to present workshops about "The Myth of Dying." Her new book, "Letters From Michael; A Communication From the Flip Side," is due out in 2004. Visit the website [www.lettersfrommichael.com](http://www.lettersfrommichael.com) or contact her at [flipside76@charter.net](mailto:flipside76@charter.net) or (952) 953-7130.

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# Mythology Reborn

Some figures wait several hundred years to reach legendary status. A few embrace it during their lifetimes, well before a century passes-- men like Joseph Campbell, whose name alone evokes the magic of which legends and myths are made. March 26, 2004 marks one hundred years since the birth of a man who elevated the concept of myths from primitive tales to primary forces worthy of serious study.

Professor Campbell believed that myths are not products of the human fantasy, but primary forces governing the human mind, as well as events in human society and in nature. And that mythologies not only explain the psychological, social, and spiritual realities of humankind--they also inform and form entire civilizations' worldviews.

In 1987, Joseph Campbell died after authoring numerous books on mythology. The following year, millions of hearts resounded with Campbell's ideas when they viewed the PBS broadcast of *Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth* with Bill Moyers. Newsweek magazine wrote that "Campbell has become one of the rarest of intellectuals in American life: a serious thinker who has been embraced by the popular culture."

Campbell often emphasized the importance of understanding the myth(s) driving modern society. Today, not only scholars delve into the mysteries of myth. Physicists, economists, psychiatrists, business executives, religious leaders, authors, and an ever growing number of the general population, are looking into myths to understand the forces that underlie modern society-- it's ability to strengthen and demolish economies, to begin and end wars, and to support and destroy the environment.

Mr. Campbell also inspired many to discover a new myth. "We need myths that will identify the individual not with a local group but with the planet ...The task is only to know what is, and then to act in relation to the brotherhood of all these things."

In honor of Mr. Campbell's centennial year, many of his close associates, such as Dr. Stanislav Grof, Dr. Jean Houston, and Chungliang Al Huang, will gather at the "Mythic Imagination & Modern Society: The Re-Enchantment of the World" conference in Palm Springs, CA, June 13-18. During this celebration, eighty renowned presenters--scientists, psychiatrists, authors, economists, artists, spiritual leaders and more--will share their insights into the forces underlying the current global condition--and facilitate the emergence of a new planetary myth. See [www.itaconferences.org](http://www.itaconferences.org). Call (415) 475-6115 for a brochure.

# An Eternal Blessing

By Stanley Peele

May today there be peace within.

May you trust your highest power

That

You are exactly

Where you are meant to be.

May you not forget

The infinite possibilities

That are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received,

And pass on the love

That has been given to you.

May you be content

Knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence

Settle into your bones.

And allow your soul the freedom

To sing, to dance,

And to bask in the Light from God.

# **The Light**

**By Kurt Venables**

**The Light is the love  
The joy, the strength, and the vision  
The life, the grace  
The essence of creation**

**The wonder of the ordinary  
Revealed by the supreme  
Like the tiny motes that glisten  
Suspended in a sunbeam**

**The beauty is the truth  
Within the answer lies  
Wise are the humble  
For humble are the wise**

**And gentle is the word  
The only path to right  
Footsteps in heaven  
Fall as softly as The Light**

# William Wordsworth

## Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood

*The Child is Father of the Man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.*

### I

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,  
The earth, and every common sight,  
To me did seem  
Apparelled in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.  
It is not now as it hath been of yore;--  
Turn wheresoe'er I may,  
By night or day,  
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

### II

The Rainbow comes and goes,  
And lovely is the Rose,  
The Moon doth with delight  
Look round her when the heavens are bare,  
Waters on a starry night  
Are beautiful and fair;  
The sunshine is a glorious birth;  
But yet I know, where'er I go,  
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

### III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,  
And while the young lambs bound  
As to the tabor's sound,  
To me alone there came a thought of grief:  
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,  
And I again am strong:  
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;  
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;  
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,  
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,  
And all the earth is gay;  
Land and sea  
Give themselves up to jollity,

And with the heart of May  
Doth every Beast keep holiday;--  
Thou Child of Joy,  
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy  
Shepherd-boy!

#### IV

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call  
Ye to each other make; I see  
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;  
My heart is at your festival,  
My head hath its coronal,  
The fulness of your bliss, I feel--I feel it all.  
Oh evil day! if I were sullen  
While Earth herself is adorning,  
This sweet May-morning,  
And the Children are culling  
On every side,  
In a thousand valleys far and wide,  
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,  
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm:--  
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!  
--But there's a Tree, of many, one,  
A single Field which I have looked upon,  
Both of them speak of something that is gone:  
The Pansy at my feet  
Doth the same tale repeat:  
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?  
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

#### V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar:  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home:  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing Boy,  
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,  
He sees it in his joy;  
The Youth, who daily farther from the east  
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,

And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended;  
At length the Man perceives it die away,  
And fade into the light of common day.

...

## IX

O joy! that in our embers  
Is something that doth live,  
That nature yet remembers  
What was so fugitive!  
The thought of our past years in me doth breed  
Perpetual benediction: not indeed  
For that which is most worthy to be blest--  
Delight and liberty, the simple creed  
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:--  
Not for these I raise  
The song of thanks and praise;  
But for those obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Fallings from us, vanishings;  
Blank misgivings of a Creature  
Moving about in worlds not realised,  
High instincts before which our mortal Nature  
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised:  
But for those first affections,  
Those shadowy recollections,  
Which, be they what they may,  
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,  
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;  
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make  
Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,  
To perish never;  
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,  
Nor Man nor Boy,  
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
Can utterly abolish or destroy!  
Hence in a season of calm weather  
Though inland far we be,  
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither,  
Can in a moment travel thither,  
And see the Children sport upon the shore,  
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

## X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!  
And let the young Lambs bound  
As to the tabor's sound!  
We in thought will join your throng,  
Ye that pipe and ye that play,  
Ye that through your hearts to-day  
Feel the gladness of the May!  
What though the radiance which was once so bright  
Be now for ever taken from my sight,  
Though nothing can bring back the hour  
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;  
We will grieve not, rather find  
Strength in what remains behind;  
In the primal sympathy  
Which having been must ever be;  
In the soothing thoughts that spring  
Out of human suffering;  
In the faith that looks through death,  
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

## XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,  
Forebode not any severing of our loves!  
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;  
I only have relinquished one delight  
To live beneath your more habitual sway.  
I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,  
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;  
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day  
Is lovely yet;  
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;  
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.  
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,  
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,  
To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.