



(Photo by Jim Burton)

# Peace Pilgrim's Progress

**NEWSLETTER NUMBER 19**

**Written at end of 6th Pilgrimage Route**

## **DEAR FRIENDS OF PEACE:**

Some of you have not heard from me for a long time. This is because I have been so very busy speaking for peace at colleges, high school, churches, etc. - but always I am happily busy. My slogan of "First things first" has enabled me to take care of my speaking engagements, keep my mail up to date and also do some walking. My lettered tunic still makes lots of contacts for me wherever I walk. With my slogan of "Every ounce counts" my possessions consist of my clothes, a comb, a folding toothbrush, a ballpoint pen, a map, some copies of my message. I am now so adjustable to changes in temperature that I wear the same clothes summer and winter, indoors and outdoors. Of course I am north in the summer and south in winter. If you wish to talk with people out of doors, you must be where weather is pleasant or people will not be out. My last two newsletters, consisting of some questions I have been asked and some of my answers and covering a variety of subjects, were so popular I'm using the same format.

## **GLEANINGS FROM MY CORRESPONDENCE**

"You express truth in such a simple way that I can understand it."

Truth is simple - it's just not so simple to live it. Therefore, immature people tend to hide behind complicated interpretations in order to avoid living simple truth.

"What can I do to make my life have more meaning?"

Fifteen years before my pilgrimage began, I felt completely willing - without any reservations - to give my life, and I started to live to give, instead of to get. Every morning I thought of God and thought of things I might do that day to be of service to God's children. I looked at every situation I came into to see if there was anything I could do there to be of service. I did as many good things as I could each day - not forgetting the importance of a pleasant word and a cheery smile. I prayed about things that seemed too big for me to handle - and right prayer motivates to right action. My life just blossomed out. Try it.

"Is it possible to work for inner peace and world peace at the same time?"

Of course you can work on inner peace and world peace at the same time. On the one hand, people have found inner peace by losing themselves in a cause larger than themselves like the cause of world peace - because finding inner peace means coming from the self-centered life into the life centered for the good of the whole. On the other hand, one of the ways of working for world peace is to work for more inner peace - for world peace will never be stable until enough of us find enough inner peace to stabilize it.

"What do I do when I feel put upon?"

Ask yourself whether or not what is required of you is unreasonable. If not, you will attain spiritual growth through serving; if so, you must learn to say "no" lovingly.

"My grandchild is coming into a world that is filled with violence."

Why not think of your grandchild as being born into a world filled with God? God's law is implemented constantly, for everything out of harmony is on its way out. The darkness we see is the disintegration of out-of-harmony things. "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep - the wrong shall fail, the right prevail - with peace on earth, good will to men." How can anyone doubt that eventually God will prevail? It is only how soon that is up to us.

"You are symbolic of the protest we all feel in these times."

I have never thought of myself as protesting against something, but rather as witnessing FOR harmonious living. Those who protest against do not usually present solutions - those who witness FOR do.

"Tell me how you keep so healthy and happy."

I keep so healthy and happy by always keeping turned to God. That means I obey God's spiritual laws - I live to be of service, I think no negative thoughts, etc. That means I obey God's physical laws - those things I know are bad for the health I do not do, those things I know are good for the health I do. My reward has been good health and a happy state of mind.

"My husband must go into surgery, and he is postponing it. What shall I do?"

If your husband must go into surgery, it is important that he go into it with as little apprehension as possible. A lady I knew faced a similar problem. She discussed it with her husband, and was able to convince him that God requires us to do everything we can for ourselves. So they undertook eating habits and living habits that they thought would be best for them. They planned to go to a beautiful and quiet place for the recuperation period - and they planned for a lovely trip afterward. He became impatient to get the surgery over with so he would feel good enough to enjoy the things they planned. It turned out to be minor instead of major, the recuperation period seemed like a vacation, and the trip seemed like a second honeymoon.

"What have you found to be a good way to remove one's desire to be perfect?"

Couldn't you just desire to strive toward perfection - to be as much in harmony as possible - to live up to the highest light you have? During my seeking period or spiritual growing up period I desired to know and do God's will for me - and then came desirelessness, knowing and doing. I'm still not perfect, of course. If I were perfect I would know everything and be able to do everything. I would be like God. However, I am able to do everything I am called to do, and I do know what I need to know to do my part in the divine plan - and I do experience the happiness of living in harmony with God's will for me.

"I do things I know I shouldn't do and don't really want to do. Do I lack discipline?"

As to discipline - body, mind and emotions are instruments which can be used by either the self-centered nature or the God-centered nature, but can only be fully controlled by the God-centered nature. When the God-centered nature takes over, you have found inner peace. Until that time comes, a partial control can be gained through discipline. It can be discipline imposed from without through early training which has become a part of the subconscious side of the self-centered nature. It can be discipline undertaken voluntarily, or self-discipline. Now if you are doing things you know you shouldn't do and don't really want to do, you certainly lack discipline. I recommend spiritual growing - and in the meantime self-discipline.

"It seems to take me so long to attain spiritual growth."

Yes, spiritual growth is not easily attained - but it is well worth the effort. Also it takes time - just as any growth takes time. One should rejoice at small gains and not be impatient - as impatience hampers the growth.

"Speak to us of death."

Death is a beautiful liberation to a freer living. Could we but see a bit deeper into life, we would grieve at birth and rejoice at death. The memorial service should be a joyous farewell party recalling the good the person has done, reading favorite poems and singing favorite songs. If we did this, the liberated one would be rejoicing with us.

"I, along with all the other non-smokers, was thankful when you asked people not to smoke at your meeting - but I was wondering if you were being loving toward the smokers."

A pilgrim's job of rousing people from their apathy and making them think may sometimes seem to come into conflict with a loving attitude toward people. However, if I saw a small child about to touch a red hot stove, I would certainly prevent the child from doing so if I could - and this would be a loving thing for me to do, although the child might not like it and might even scream. A woman wrote recently to tell me that when I refused to sit next to her because she was smoking she stayed awake for hours thinking about it - and cut out smoking the next day.

"My husband is a cigarette smoker and I cannot stand the smoke. Could you tell me what to do?"

Evidently you are allergic to tobacco smoke, and therefore you should never be in a room where someone is smoking. Some smoke, like wood smoke, is not poisonous - but tobacco smoke is poisonous, and certainly not good for anyone. Of course it would be good for him and for you if your husband would stop smoking, but if he doesn't want to do that, he should never smoke in a room where you are. Could he smoke outdoors or in some part of the house reserved for him or in some place away from home? No use quarreling about this. It's best to use your energy to find a solution.

"How does one transform such a desire as smoking or drinking instead of suppressing it?"

When it comes to such things as smoking or drinking, I would just quit - as I quit the caffeine habit long ago. However, some prefer to substitute. I just met a lady who is substituting tea brewed from mint leaves for coffee. I know another lady who has substituted fruit juice for cocktails, and she says her friends don't even know it yet. A man I know has put a little packet of raisins and nuts into the pocket where he once kept cigarettes. It can be done.

"Please share with me your knowledge about how best to serve the universe."

If you want to serve the universe, the obvious place to begin is right where you are. That's where I began. I looked at every situation I came into and wondered, "What can I do to be of service in this situation?" Sometimes there was nothing I could do, but often there was - a helping hand, a word of cheer, a pleasant smile. Then, after I had given a lot, a most wonderful spiritual receiving began - giving me more to give.

"I am troubled by wrong reactions on my part to what others say and do?"

As to wrong reactions to what others say and do - if you really understood everything, all your wrong reactions would turn to compassion. Those who evoke wrong reactions in you are out of harmony, and

especially in need of love. Yes, it is important to be loving. Meet every situation with love, and you will be able to handle it. If someone does the meanest thing to me, I feel the deepest compassion for that person and pray for that person - I do not hurt myself by a wrong reaction of bitterness or anger.

"Please say more on how to stay in harmony."

The best way to always stay in harmony is to always keep your mind on God. If you feel closer to God when beautiful music is playing, keep your house filled with beautiful music. If you feel closer to God when you see flowers, keep some flowers in your home. If certain beautiful words make you feel closer to God, read them or recite them often or put them up in a place where you often are. I'm sure you know that living according to God's will brings God closer.

"Tell me one way in which I can change the world."

I'm sure you know that whenever you improve your life the world becomes a better place to live in - so you can change the world by changing yourself.

"I am so lonely. What can I do about it?"

You are never really alone. God is always with you. Turn to God for the best possible companionship. Turn to books and music for inspiration. Turn to the phone to say words of cheer to a shut-in, or visit one who is lonely. In giving we receive, and our loneliness fades away.

Blessings and love and peace,

PEACE PILGRIM  
Cologne, N. J. 08213