

LAYING DOWN YOUR LIFE

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT

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This is a recent poem of mine, *To the End of Time*.

*Since the beginning of the world
I have loved you,
and sounded with your primeval tone.*

*Since the beginning of the world
I have thrilled to hear your voice,
see your face,
and know your love.*

*So here am I on this day
in the aura of your shining,
growing strong
in the corona of your will.*

*A man walks
in a shadow of brilliant light,
in the ascending flame of a white-hot fire,
and in the reverberation of life itself.*

*Today a man serves his Lord as a friend
and as a king in his own world,*

*fulfilling your dream
to the end of time.*

We as human beings become masterful in the world in which we live when we are serving a higher reality. It is the servant who becomes the master. We gain mastery when we learn to serve the Creator that is within us, and to follow the direction of that great Creator—to speak with His love and His truth, Her love and Her truth, and therefore be in service to that reality, so that it streams through us. That establishes our mastery in the world in which we live. By being a friend to the Lord within and the Lord above, we inherit that larger kingdom in the context of our own lives.

Things go so awfully wrong in a human life when a human being tries to establish their own kingdom without respect to the larger order of things. Some of the political candidates of our day are easy targets in this regard. They make a show of human power

without reference to a higher reality, and therefore lose dignity. When they do so, they lose their sense of nobility and stature, and therefore they lose their ability to lead in any meaningful sense. When a man or a woman comes along who is in service to a higher reality, and then brings that higher reality, expressing it through them in the here and now, there is something compelling. That person has something meaningful to invest in the world in which they are living.

We call that higher reality heaven. As long as we think of that heaven as someplace to go later—real or imaginary—we are missing the whole point. The point is that heaven is present now, to be streaming through us in the living of our life. Heaven is a reality to be expressed and embodied, so that that heaven comes down here.

When we think of Jesus, perhaps we think of that great spirit of unconditional love that he brought, and how he brought it in the face of whatever happened in his life. He was certainly an embodiment and an expression of love, and he brought a teaching of love. Here is some of that teaching. I do believe it was intended to apply to men and women alike, so I have altered the wording to take that into account.

*This is my commandment, That ye love
one another, as I have loved you.*

Greater love hath no man or woman than

*this, that they lay down their life for their
friends.*

A human being who doesn't serve something higher doesn't have that much to bring to the table, actually. Just little old me as a human being. If I am serving something higher, I have that which is higher to bring. For starters, I have the higher reality of myself that I am investing in the situation.

Jesus was the living embodiment of the Lord of Love. We are all the lord of something. We all have dominion and creative power at our fingertips in the higher reality of who we are. What are you the lord of? Yes, we are human beings, but there's a higher reality of Being that's indwelling in each one of us. We have that to invest in other people and in our world and in our realm.

You are a king or a queen in your world when you are in service to a higher reality. And then it is not humility to deny your own sovereignty. There's nothing humble about that. True humility is being a friend to what is higher. But true humility is also accepting your own crown, your own robe and your own kingdom.

It is clear to me that when Jesus spoke of laying down your life for your friends, he was speaking about living, not dying. He was speaking about making an investment in other people. There is earthly dimension to that investment. There is something to be *done* to lay down your life. Laying down your life

isn't just a nice feeling. Laying down your life is cooking the dinner. Laying down your life is harvesting the corn; it is sharing the Attunement. It's being there and saying the fitting word.

When a servant of the Most High shows up, they have that investment to make and it is made in the earth: there's something very physical about it, not to be ignored.

Practically any virtuous occupation has the potential of being an opportunity to lay down your life for your friend in that act. Cleaning that sink, washing that dish, whatever it might be, can be done in the spirit of service, in the spirit of making an investment. Your life changes when you know that to be true.

It is interesting that in the general course of things in our human world, people make investments in an earthly sense and they expect an earthly reward. Perhaps there is an earthly return when we lay down our life—that's all part of the picture. But ultimately the reward is heavenly—and I don't mean after you die. There is an *instant* heavenly reward when you serve. There is something happening that is of a spiritual nature, and that is the fulfillment, of itself. There will be more fulfillment of that nature tomorrow, and the earth has a part to play in that process. You can have faith that you won't be bereft of something to eat or a roof over your head. But the reward is coming to us in the moment that we are making that investment, and in *all* the moments that we're making it we have that reward. For most people, it

seems so easy to be waiting for the reward later, either in heaven, if we're particularly virtuous, or on earth. We want our return.

I'm making my investment here, and I have my reward in heaven here and now, because what comes back to me is of a heavenly nature from the world that I'm serving. I *have* my reward. I have my fulfillment in this life here and now, and it's in the joy and excitement of being alive in this manner. It's in the joy and excitement of being sovereign in my world and having the privilege of bringing what I love, above all, through me into my world.

Addiction comes about because a person isn't making the investment, and they're not enjoying the return that would come from doing so. So they are looking for the joy of life through stimulation. And we all are supposed to be happy. But when you don't have the real deal you go looking for a substitute. You go looking for it but you don't find it. You can find stimulation, but you cannot find happiness through addiction or through postponed gratification. The gratification and fulfillment is in being of service now. I have the pleasure of letting the greatness of Being that's within me come through, and I have the fulfillment of what comes back to me in my experience as I do.

Here's what I know for myself. Perhaps you share this knowing. When I lay down the life of the highest reality of who I am, it is no small thing. When I lay down my life, there is

Creation. When I lay down my life, there is victory and there is fulfillment. Creation comes all the way through. It is in process, and it is coming to fulfillment because I am here.

That is what we know when we are standing in the higher reality of who we are. We feel the substantiality of it. We move away from being a dabbler, or a social butterfly. We move out of the life-as-a-cocktail-party reality. No, I have an investment to make in my realm. I have an investment to make in the people in my realm. I'm laying down my life.

We all have the opportunity to live a committed life. As a young person, I remember feeling that a committed life looked like a life of being shackled to burdensome responsibility. Early in my life, I went from job to job. Then somehow it got into my being that I had something substantial to lay down. I had my life to give, and I wanted to lay it down in a way that meant something. I wanted to live a life that had integrity with what I loved and served.

Whether we are thinking about a vocation or the place we live, a community, a family, an organization, or a nation, we have a committed life to give in that context. Each of us has a great investment to make. We should consider carefully what it is that we are lord of and consider what our gifts are. We should consider what it is that we love and serve, what our perception is of that

higher reality of Being that we want to allow to live in *this* world, in *our* realm. I serve a King of Love, and so love must reign in my world. I serve a God of Truth and wholeness, and therefore truth must reign in my world. I serve a living God, and therefore I must live, and this kingdom in which I live must live. All that calls me to lay down my life. How about you?

Sunrise Ranch, where I live, is many things. It is an organization and it is a conference center. It really is a ranch with cows, chickens and sheep. It is a headquarters for Emissaries of Divine Light. It's a place where people learn and grow and transform. It's a spiritual community. For me, I'm laying down my life for Sunrise Ranch. It's an earthly thing, at one level—350 acres between the red sandstone Rimrock to the east and the granite rock and pines on Green Ridge to the west. In between are pastures and buildings, and most importantly my friends and fellow community members.

There's something to be grown out of those earthly things. It isn't only the earthly things themselves. With the investment that we make in them, there is the potentiality and the fruit of them that is possible. There is the opportunity in earthly things to do something grand that is of a truly spiritual nature. But it isn't "just spiritual," as most people might think of it. I think trying to do something "just spiritual," while ignoring the earthly dimensions of it, is not good for your health, for starters. Our bodies are an important

dimension of our spiritual experience. Fail to invest in the well-being of your physical body at your own peril!

All the physical forms in our life are like that. Without them, spirituality goes nowhere. We have something to invest in earthly form, to do something spiritual, and there is something spiritual that comes out of it. We have the opportunity to ground the Most High in the most low. So anytime you think that the job you're doing is beneath you, it's a good thing to remember: *I'm grounding the Most High in this lowly thing that's right before me.*

Have you ever noticed that about people who are masterful? No job is below them. I've been impressed that people who are truly experts in their field are not above anything. In fact, they care *far more* about the earthly dimensions and details in which they are working than the average person. In contrast, I observe that the people who are stumbling through life often consider themselves above the practical task before them. I say we are here to bring the Most High into the most low. We are made to ground our spirituality in our own immediate realm of service.

When we take away the illusion that spiritual things relate to the past or future and realize that any spiritual reality that means anything is present here and now, we begin to see that all things are spiritual. There are different dimensions of that spirituality, but it's all

spiritual, from the cow out in the field to God in the highest heaven.

The power of the spiritual comes from a secret place for us as human beings. We can not peer into the mystical realm of its origination. So, for many people, the reality of God seems like a great mystery. And yet the reality is that when we turn our face to the reality of God, by whatever name, and let the qualities of the Creator come through us, then what proceeds from God—the spirit of God that emanates from that reality—is not a separate reality from whatever God is.

Is God separate from His Love, or Her Love? If you're experiencing God's Love, are you not experiencing God? If you're experiencing the Light of God coming through you, isn't that God? Is there God over here and then His or Her Light over here? No, it's all God. It's all God, streaming through *everything*.

So when you are loving, you are knowing God. That *is* God. That's not something different from God—that's *God*. The highest reality of Being is now not just up there; it's inside and coming out through you, and you're knowing it. If you meet somebody who's shining the Light of Being—radiant, loving, giving, and in joy—is that not God that you're touching in them? That's not something other than what God is. That's the reality of the one God that's in everything and everyone, and it's coming through.

Most of us are so used to living ego-based

lives that we don't see it that way. We see each other as human beings with very human qualities. But if a human being is truly allowing the spirit of the Creator that they are, in their highest reality, to come through them, you have the opportunity to touch God in them. And if you are touching that reality, it's right to worship God streaming through that person. You have just met God.

Have you met God in that way? I have. I've met people who were streaming that reality, and it brought me to my knees. They were laying down their life for me.

You and I have that same opportunity—best done without protestations that “I'm revealing God to you here.” Reveal the simple reality of Being. Religion has glorified it, in stained glass and elsewhere, to the point that people believe that the knowing of it is unattainable to us as mere mortals. *We're just here to pray to some reality that happened way back when or someplace else, in some heaven that we can't really relate to, and it's not attainable to us, at least not here and now. If you are really good, you can experience it later.*

We have to acknowledge that the self-seeking one can't know this. The self-seeking one is not laying down their life for anything but themselves. If we try to lay down our lives for ourselves, we kill our spirit in the process. The self-seeking one in us is too interested in their status to lay down their life for another. The self-seeking one wants to be out in front, claiming a place in the world.

When you are ready to lay down your life you know, *I have my place. I don't need to find my place; I'm not looking for you to give me my place. I'm in my place of service to a higher reality.*

Then I know that the reality of who I am is in that higher reality. I'm the lord of something. How about you? In the highest heaven of your Being, you hold magical power. You are the lord of the creative essence and power that is rightly yours. I believe that inside each one of us, we know we do. The self-seeking one has no clue. But the servant of the Most High knows who they are.

In that awareness, you realize the substantiality of what you have to bring. You also realize that you bring the victory, and whatever you set yourself to accomplish in that awareness, it shall be done. Whatever “finishing” means, I finish what I start. It shall be done. It shall be done because I am here. The social butterfly can't say that. The vagrant or the shiftless can't say that. The self-seeking one cannot say that—only the one who's living a committed life.

We each owe it to the higher reality of who we are to consider carefully what we have to invest and what we're investing it in, and for what purpose. What is our kingdom? And who are those for whom we are laying down our lives?

In the beginning of that process it can seem lonely. It can feel like *I'm the only one—why should I care about this? Nobody else is.* But

fulfillment is embracing that thing in solitude, not waiting for your friends to pat you on the back. Commitment is knowing your calling and deciding that this is yours to do, and doing it—and then finding your friends who are willing to lay down their lives *with* you, so that you're laying down your life for them and now they're willing to lay down their life for you. Oh, that we should have that privilege! But if you go looking for that and you're waiting for other people to lay down their life for you, good luck.

No, I'm laying down *my* life. And in that experience I have the privilege of meeting those who are willing to do the same for the sake of the kingdom—ultimately the one kingdom, and all who are within it. In that process, we know the privilege of laying down our lives for each other.

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