

Chapter 1

The humanity of Christ speaks to us from the cross, not His divinity. Had he suffered not as a human but as God, with the knowledge of the universe, His life would be of no consequence. His struggles would be all false. He could have called on any kind of power He had to, to be able to endure struggles, so it would have been no example to us. At least it would have been an unfair example. It would have been a falsehood. That is why the Church does not recognize some of the apocryphal writings. They give you a hero instead of a human being, and the whole point of understanding Christ is that He was first a man. That is the only way God's infusion into the material form can mean anything. If a full-fledged God came into the material form and had all those powers and could change the rules, simply at will, that would not be fair to us. So when you see Him at a point where He is fearful and He doubts, that is His humanness. The point is to recognize the fact that He was afraid that God had abandoned Him. But the point that is supposed to be made with us is that even though He went through that period of fear and doubt, He still went beyond that and relied on the faith.

The whole point in life is to be able to utilize faith; the seed of faith comes from the soul itself. It knows and it tries to impress that knowledge on the conscious mind. Yet, because of all the interference of the material world, the soul cannot talk directly to the conscious mind and say, "Hey, I am your boss. This is what we are going to do." The interference between the higher self and the conscious mind is all the karma that we have carried in in this lifetime or we have made during this lifetime, the attitudes that we have that aren't according to the soul attitude. So, we go through periods of doubt. When we overcome those doubts and act on faith or the inner knowing, then that is the soul in greater control. That is the real you knowing that God never abandons us. No matter what the world does to us, we are never left alone to our own means.

It would be untrue to think of Christ, once He was baptized by John, as being fully aware of His Godliness. No, he wasn't. He had to evolve to that point of knowing. When did He reach that full knowing? My personal feeling is it was either at the actual moment of his real death or immediately after it, because if He had been fully aware before the whole crucifixion, His natural reaction would have been to suspend it all. He didn't have to go through that suffering. That was His willful choice. He could have done things differently, and it would have accomplished the same thing without His being totally humiliated, without having to prove to the extreme that He believed totally in what He preached. The whole point of Christ is to show the commitment we can have. The commitment that He had, and this is where we miss out terribly, one of the biggest examples of Christ's life, is that He lived on faith totally, totally. He had no written guarantee. Sure, things happened in His life where it looked like He was God, He was the Messiah, but there were a number of different understandings of a messiah. Which one was it that He was going to be fulfilling, if it was Him? There were hundreds and hundreds of messiahs in those

days, those claiming to be a messiah. Many of them fulfilled parts of the predictions of the messiah, but none of them filled them totally, and none of them really went the full path because they weren't the true messiah, they had their own agenda.

The reason why you are here on this earth is to correct karma. We correct karma by our interaction with other individuals and that interaction has to be based on faith. If I treat you well or with respect or do good for you, that is no guarantee I am going to get that in return. So, it is the idea that, "Okay, that is fine, but I am still going to do it because I will get a return ultimately in some other way." We are fighting our humanness that wants immediate returns. We want returns word for word, action for action, and when we don't get that, we must call on an inner strength of belief or faith. We don't realize our life is a test of the very same thing that Christ tried to show us; our life has to be lived on faith. That, yes, you are a son or a daughter of God, therefore you must act like a God. We don't do that because it requires too much faith, too much inner strength. Oh, sometimes when it is easy we act loving and caring and compassionate and it comes from our heart. It is really a true experience, a true feeling, but as long as it is kind of convenient and not too demanding. When the road gets a little rocky, we abandon faith. Ultimately it is a question of, "Do you believe?" If you truly do, you will succeed. If you are only hoodwinking yourself, fooling yourself, you are going to come back again through reincarnation.

Any doubt that Christ ever showed was there for us to understand that He was as human as we were. Oh, there were times when He was very strong in His conviction. But there were other times when He wasn't. We don't have a record of His remarks at the pillar where He was beaten. There is no human being who could be beaten the way He was and not have some doubt and not say some things that would not be according to the character we would expect. But there again, why not? Because it would be too much of a challenge for us. We would think, "How could that be God and show that much fear and doubt?" Perhaps it is good we only know what we know about Christ's suffering and doubt, but on the other hand perhaps we should know the whole picture, so we know what it is to be afraid, to be in doubt. We have been given too much of a sanitized Christ for our own good. It is not that someone deliberately said, "Well, we must eliminate some things for the good of the people." Certainly there have been things that the writers of the Gospel didn't write in, and I wouldn't be surprised if there weren't things that over the years, in the early years, that someone decided that, "Well, let's eliminate this part of it." Who can say if those eliminations were divinely inspired or were some man's choice? Yet the ultimate outcome was really the inspiration God wanted us to have.