

The Gift of Divine Grace

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Spiritual transformation is outside our control. This total change of consciousness cannot be *achieved* in any way but is a gift of divine grace. Although the spiritual journey is often presented in a linear fashion, quietening first the body, then the mind, so the spirit can be touched, we are not dealing with progressive stages but simultaneous, overlapping, deepening levels: we spiral through them, being afforded glimpses, as we practise.

As we have seen in previous letters there is often right at the start of the spiritual journey a sudden deep insight, a remembering of our true nature, a glimpse of a wider dimension. This helps us to turn away from preoccupation with the surface reality. We remember that the *'Light'* already dwells within us; we are already *'enlightened'*: *"We have come from the light, from the place where the light came into being by itself, established itself..... We are its children"*. (*Gospel of Thomas 50*) The early Church Fathers called this the moment of *'conversion'* or *'metanoia'*, a change of heart and mind that allows the memory of our true *'self'*, *'our Divine spark,'* to emerge. This will enable us to step over the threshold between the different levels of perception. When we enter our inner being, our *'self'* through meditation, we leave our rational intelligence, our emotions and our sense perceptions behind and operate purely from the faculty superior to reason: our intuitive intelligence. This is our link and channel of communication with the Divine. The *'self'* is

unaffected by the outer events of our life and is free to help us with its insights and intuitions. These are granted in the silence of meditation, in dreams or in other ways our spiritual self has found to reach us.

The impetus for '*metanoia*' is often a crisis point or major life event in our lives, when the seemingly secure and unchanging reality we live in, is bewilderingly turned upside down. We are rejected by an individual or a group; we face failure, loss of esteem; we lose a treasured job or our health suddenly fails us. The result can be either a refusal to accept the change, a descent into depression or despair or faced with the fact that our reality is not as immutable as we considered it to be, we may rise to the challenge to look at ourselves, our habitual framework, our opinions and values with different eyes. It is in such a moment, when the chain made up out of all our conditioning, all our thoughts, memories and emotions momentarily breaks, that we may experience standing free and unhindered in the *Here and Now*, the eternal moment. Then for an instant we see reality as it is. Quite early on in meditation we often experience a sense of real peace and even joy bubbling up. Moments like these when we are released from self-preoccupation are Divine gifts. Some of us may have had such a moment of transcendence, awareness of a different reality, an escape from the prison of the '*ego*', whilst listening to music, poetry or being absorbed in a work of art. Others may never have been consciously aware of an actual moment of insight, and yet at some level may always have been aware of the existence of a Higher Reality. They are without knowing becoming gradually more in tune with this Reality.

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In the picture: sunflowers in Bonnevaux by Kailas Moorthy