

MESSAGE TO BE GIVEN AT IRMA HARRISON'S MEMORIAL SERVICE

IRMA WRITES:

When I asked God why I wanted to write my own memorial service, I listened. I listened a long time before I finally heard what I thought was a satisfactory response. I heard this: "You worked hard at trying to live a good life, a happy life, a contributing life, and it has made you a very self-sufficient person – sufficient enough to get yourself through this life's adventure reasonably happy up to the very end. While it is not important to have the last word, your family and friends will not be too upset if you do." I hope all of you are smiling and saying to yourself, "This is Irma."

I am no longer with you bodily because of the Universal Law of death. Only in memory can you touch me, or shout "I love you!" into my hearing aids – and I hope you continue to do so. Memory is pretty wonderful stuff. Some parts of it may not bring a smile to your face, so it is wise to push the memory button for just pleasant recollection. Life is much more livable with happiness.

I expect the last message we write in our lifetime should be a summary of "knowings." It should tell of a lifetime of gathering Truths – yes, even those times when the mask of the clown is stripped away and we find ourselves flush against the wall where we have to stop and wonder what lies ahead on the other side. While momentarily I have passed out of view from my family and multitude of friends whom I have come to deeply and sincerely love, in our last brief hour together I would hope my last message might inspire helpful, quiet thought.

Before all of us stands an open door to the unlimited blessings our Christian religion calls "God." If we mature and grow wise, we pass through and enter a sanctuary of peace within ourselves. We each have to search and find this God in our own heart – in our own way. I came to the conclusion in my search that there are many roads that lead to God. God is Love and God is intelligence and we expect love and intelligence to accept our differences. There can't possibly be just one single approach to the vastness of the Universe. I prefer to not set up narrow limitations with a one and only dogma. My ten years of study of the various religions of the world that I spent with a small group of interested seekers like myself, taught me that God loves us all and has no preferences. It made me realize I personally could not worship a Love/Intelligent Creator who created anything or anyone only to destroy that creation in some ghastly way. The purpose for my religious development is to help people unfold their maximum potential – to develop and use faith/love – and to realize the wisdom of forgiveness. It is necessary for varied cultures to develop different methods for finding a real Truth that makes of them someone of which God can be proud.

There is Divine potential within all and every life. It just takes some of us longer to find it and to realize the necessity of developing it. The God I have searched for and found is to me specific(ally) Love. That is certainly not a unique find. Love will solve any problem we encounter: eliminate war, crime, (and) brutality. Sadly, we have many undeveloped souls who have not yet realized that Love, properly understood, is truly what they are searching for. Out of the unknown infinite we have come, and into the Infinite we must all return. How we handle this is an individual matter. At this point in time of my Infinite process, with the reasoning just mentioned, I feel the most logical solution is to reincarnate and (to) return again until I have mastered the route "From clod to God." This lifetime hardly seems to be enough to make me ready for the perfection of a so named Heaven. I love this beautiful world and I'd truly like to come back to it, (and be) among wonderful people just like the ones I have so enjoyed in this life, where we'll be sharing things even better than we've had this time – with still greater opportunity to find the wisdom that is still unknown to me.

An ocean wave breaks on the shore and then is gone, leaving behind it just a fading line of foam. But the sea itself is more than the residue foam its breakers leave behind. When wave and foam are gone, there is still the mighty surging ocean itself, getting ready to break once again upon the sands of the beach. We shape ourselves by an infinity of waves that break upon the shores that rim the great, mighty, all-inclusive ocean.

With every turn in the path we're following, a new view appears. There are those who walk beside

us all the way. There are others who seem to pass us swiftly with just a wave and perhaps a kind word. Others saunter and lag behind, but we are all – the good and not-so-good – heading in the same ultimate direction. Life is not measured in terms of time, for time is endless, but only in terms of accomplished living. That goal must include the lesson to learn and practice the lesson of genuine loving – loving the good and the bad. God created both. A kindness to the bad is the best magic wand we have to alter their weaknesses into strength and possibly arouse a bit of their neglected development of their soul.

I like to think my passing is just a rest between two notes of the symphony of my infinite. This rest is a part of my life just as sleep has been part of my recent sojourn. And now I hope you are smiling because you know trying to get to sleep has always been one of my greatest problems. Perhaps that could mean I'm going to be nervously squirming to return to this side again because I like this earthly school. I do not know what lies around this corner I have just turned, but infinite life is the work of a grand and kind Intelligence and it all has great meaning beyond my present capacity to see.

I have been so fortunate to have lived this lifetime amid the splendor of the gorgeous, natural beauty of this earth. My “tree house” at Independence Village was a perfect spot for the later, alone days of my life – living in the treetops with their riot of bloom after the nakedness of their winter – and watching the birds with their perfect freedom search for the necessities of their un-earthbound existence. I've cried inside as I see flowers being torn from their normal home and jammed into a vase of water. It has hurt when I thought of the deer, the elk, the bear losing their carefree existence in the name of something called “sport and enjoyment.” I had to learn to live with those things that others found to be enjoyment. I even fried the fish my husband proudly brought home, and I tried never to preach about the distress I saw in it because I do respect the individuality of each of us. Nothing moves me closer to God than a beautiful rose in all its glory on the bush that bore it, or a glimpse of a deer peacefully feeding on the mountainside. My husband used to call me “Nature Girl” and threatened to build me a tree house in one of the parks in Fresno when we lived there. So, of course, I loved my “tree house” at Independence Village.

(AT THIS POINT HAVE THE SOLOIST SING “I BELIEVE.”)

Each parting makes us more aware of what is truly of value. Relationships become very precious. This time around I have established relationships that I know will emphasize great togetherness in all that still lies ahead of me. I could mention names, but that is unnecessary because those cherished souls also feel the comfort of the wonderful times we have shared. My family – my clan – the tribe of which I'm a part are grieving momentarily in their own individual way. Earthtime will take care of that as values clarify and priorities sort themselves out to be remembered. My greatest wish is that the lasting values of my life has somehow thrust us all ahead into a larger life of our own.

In this lifetime I had the wonderful, appreciated assistance of a husband for 49 ½ years when he made a turn in the path of our traveling together that I could not take. It left me remembering that “You were so good to me – there are still so many things I wish we'd done together – so many things I wish I'd said to you.” We were both proud of our four children – each for their individual selves. We did not judge them, but merely loved each through his/her experiences. One of the last things my husband said was, “I have no qualms about leaving this world in the hands of my grandchildren.” Neither do I. And even beyond them is our great grandchildren – Erin, Chris, Rebecca, Abigail, Zachary and Samuel – plus our youngest granddaughter, Robin. We have all the faith necessary for them to acquire the wisdom of Kahlil Gibran when he wrote: “To the depth of your hope and desires lies the silent knowledge of the beyond, and like seeds dreaming beneath the snow, your heart dreams of spring. Trust the dreams, for in them is hidden the gate of eternity.” Instructions are written in the fabric of our being. Read the instructions carefully before plunging into guesswork.

(SOLOIST WILL SING “SOMEWHERE MY LOVE”)

Along side the love for my family and friends, my greatest enjoyment has been that lifetime research of the philosophies of the world. This really unknown God/Creation thing is the greatest mystery of our existence and it's the most important mystery of our existence. Those ten years I spent studying the various philosophies of the different cultures certainly did not make me an authority of philosophy to anyone but myself. It was something I needed for the feel of fulfillment to make my lifetime one of happiness and spiritual growth, and it gave me a satisfying, comforting road map to follow when there are so many strange , enticing paths we can take. From it all I learned the importance of sincere love, even for those who crossed my path on a roadway of their own undisciplined choice – undisciplined according to my individual thinking. On this journey I arrived at a three word religion that suited me best: LOVE, SERVE, ENJOY! I tried to live those three words. I have certainly experienced wonderful love in my life and it has made for great happiness. I feel my greatest accomplishment has been to look at my four children and their offspring and say to myself, “They wouldn't be here doing the good things they are doing if it hadn't been for me.” I trust I have served to a degree where my life has not been so much of a problem as it has sometimes been a solution. My lasting gift to everyone is the desire for you to live the rest of your life with love. Real love does not grasp – it holds lightly. Love does not fear – it trusts. Love looks beyond self-interest and delights in the happiness of others. It maintains an atmosphere for freedom. Love is everlasting! So I am not gone from you, and the great love I have for you I take with me to whatever it is that lies ahead in this eternal plan of God.

I've probably gained more wisdom and development from the writings of James Dillet Freeman than from any other source in this life span. He wrote a poem called THE TRAVELER which I will use for my final shalom. It pleases me to make him a part of my farewell for this time around.

THE TRAVELER
by James Dillet Freeman

She has put on invisibility.
Dear Lord, I cannot see --
But this I know, although the road ascends
And passes from my sight,
That there will be no night;
That You will take her gently by the hand
And lead her on
Along the road of life that never ends,
And she will find it is not death but dawn.
I do not doubt that You are there as here,
And You will hold her dear.

Our life did not begin with birth,
It is not of the earth;
And this that we call death, it is no more
Than the opening and closing of a door --
And in Your house how many rooms must be
Beyond this one where we rest momentarily.

Dear Lord, I thank You for the faith that frees,
The love that knows it cannot lose its own;
The love that , looking through the shadows, sees
That you and she and I are ever one!