

The Man Without Opinions

By Peter Rennick

Our subject is Parzival, but let us begin with a few seeming tangents.

Who is not angry today? Who does not feel someone's anger and does not respond in kind? Is it just in our time that anger has become unhinged, randomized, and pervasive? One thinks of ancient Rome for pictures to balance it out. We remember Auschwitz. But on a personal level, society can seem to grow more abusive, oppressive, abandoning, each year. Still, each of us has to come to terms with our own personal defense systems, which is what anger represents – the armed forces of the government of me. Anger is like the threat of war and its first act. Anger says, 'I'm serious and I'm hurt, disappointed, afraid, and want to hurt back.'

Doesn't that sound a little like the Parzival story? An immature young man who clumsily becomes an inadvertent rapist, a murderer who assumes his victim's identity (as the Red Knight), who is forced by his own internal struggles over his inability to fit in and his desire to prove himself worthy of a second chance, to wander in steadfast search for the vision and the reality he had stumbled on so innocently and so consequentially. This vision and the higher reality that lies behind it became a mystery he had to solve - the answer to the question of his own life – and he had to puzzle through in uncertainty over several years, suffering largely alone.

Somehow, Parzival had to resolve his own multiple fears - of failure, of ineptitude, of failing to feel. He had to mature, to experience his own time and to live and fit into a human body, a human Earth. In a series of lectures called *Metamorphoses of the Soul*, Rudolf Steiner speaks about what we might call the moral evolution of the human being, and of the three 'schools' we must successively matriculate through if we would make our way back to the reality of the spirit. He calls them the school of Anger, the school of Truth, and finally, the school of Devotion or Surrender, each with its own particular pedagogical mission in the maturation of the life cycle of the soul. We are all caterpillars.

And perhaps we are at a point in time when the stew of anger heating up on the world's backburner is beginning to bubble in an empty house. Is anyone coming home? For Steiner, the mission of Anger is revealed in the myth of Prometheus: "When the flood of anger is outpoured in the individual soul, the Ego, striving for fullest expression, finds itself enchained, as the Ego of Prometheus who was chained to the rock."

But we cannot be punished for what we don't express. Only a human being who has experienced the positive anger of disagreeing with what is wrong can learn gradually how to form clearer judgments, though anger can also 'degenerate into rage'. "The mission of anger is ... shown to be twofold: it is the harbinger both of our independence and of our selflessness in a time when the Ego itself cannot yet take its own education in hand.... Conquered, purified anger becomes transformed into love and gentleness, which is its counterpart.... A loving hand is seldom one which was not sometimes clenched at the sight of injustice or folly. These two things are self-complementary."

In the school of Truth we start to learn what an obstacle our own anger can be in trying to perceive where the truth lies: "... truth can be attained only by one who strives to overcome his passions, instincts and desires so that they do not intervene." The truth craves our love, care and devotion – "anger weakens, truth strengthens us."

To clarify the centrality of Truth, Rudolf Steiner quotes this beautiful statement of Coleridge: "If a man loves Christianity more than truth he will soon notice that he loves his own Christian sect more than Christianity, indeed he will see that he loves himself more than his sect." The moment a man prefers himself and his opinions to truth, he manifestly exerts an anti-social influence and tends to alienate himself from human community."

Before coming to the final school, whose curriculum focuses on the mission of Devotion and Surrender, let us ask: "What has this to do with Parzival?" We readily see how these three schools of the soul undergird the experiences of this young man, who certainly would not have recognized himself as the same person at the end of the story, had he been able to meet his future self. We can picture that early moment in the woods when the young boy Parzival sees the life-changing vision of three knights riding in glory through the sunlit forest. Though he doesn't even know what they are, Parzival's destiny is sealed. In a mood of the profound wonder he experiences the deepest reverence and joy, feelings



If you want to know yourself,

Behold the world that lies around you.

If you want to know the world,

It is your own soul you must sound.

Rudolf Steiner

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Our featured article, titled *Arthurian Knights, Grail Community and Parzival*, written by Brian Gray, presents the historical evolution of the Arthur and Parzival mystery streams and provides a spiritual/cosmic context of the Grail story as Wolfram von Eschenbach tells it. Peter Rennick, in his article *The Man Without Opinions*, particularizes some of the story's themes, hinting at Parzival's initiatory struggles as he moves from anger to a love of the truth and then to a deep devotion and reverence for all things. In a way, these two complementary approaches to Parzival reflect the Northern and Southern streams their articles describe: "how to bring the spiritual to man and man to the spiritual." We hope you find them insightful, and for those who are interested in reading the book *Parzival*, you can now find it on our Library Book list.

A big thank you to everyone who took the time to respond to our letter request earlier this year. Your comments on your individual spiritual journeys, your art and poetry, and your answers to the questions about your studies are extremely rich and informative. We mentioned in our letter that we would be speaking about the APO program at a conference in Switzerland at the Anthroposophical Society. At that event we shared your art work, poems, survey responses, and spiritual journey letters, and viewed the *Enter Light Voices from Prison* poetry event with people from all around the world who, like us, were moved by your courage, dedication, and perseverance on your spiritual path to these newfound insights.

In humble recognition of your commitment to self-transformation, APO is sending each of you a copy of *How to Know Higher Worlds* by Rudolf Steiner, accompanied by a study guide prepared by one of the founders of the program, Eileen Bristol. Both are yours to write in and keep with the hope that you take your time to study and find deeper meaning to your spiritual studies. Though they need not be returned to us, we would love to see and read your work from the study guide. When you finish, if you choose to send the guide to us, it will be returned to you within a short period of time. May this book and study guide serve as a catalyst for your continuing development!

Blessings on your path, Kathy Serafin

Illuminations

I want to start by thanking you for taking the time to include that very special hand-written letter, along with the books. *How to Know Higher Worlds* was truly remarkable I desire these effects as well, but now understand that it is not enough to just wish for the higher knowledge. Simply stated, "this wish alone, without the willingness to meet specific requirements of esoteric training, achieves nothing", and I must now put forth with this great work. *Kenneth, Clairsville, OH*

Sometimes I fear my soul too blackened by sin to be able to attain the higher mysteries. But also I am reminded of the difference between carnal fleshy things and spiritual essences. My heart craves the spiritual things now more than fleshy but just a few years ago it was reversed. Now for some reason unknown to me, the poles of my compass have begun to shift. Something in my internal compass has changed. I now gravitate towards truth. *Samuel, Whiteville, IN*

Thanks for the opportunity to read the enclosed books. I'm a slow reader and read them several times and each time something would pop up out of them that I missed!
Dean, Springfield, MO

It was a pleasure today to read the fall 2014, no. 22 Newsletter. I learned a lot. Your newsletter section *Inspired by Your Reading* was good for me. I saw how *Domenic of Waynesburg, PA* responded so favorably to a three book publications that I would like very much to read myself. The books are *Life beyond Death, Life between Death and Rebirth*, and *Astronomy and Spiritual Science*. *James, Corcoran, CA*

Admittedly a short time ago, less than two years, the content of these books would have been dismissed by me since they vary so much from the Christian teachings here, but due to the many unanswered questions of my own, I have begun searching for information to make it all rational, rather than just blind faith. Many are the subjects in the books and specific lectures that I have no knowledge of or experience with, so for now I am satisfied with being still and open to the obviously many teachings that are yet to be shared with me so that all will make sense in the future. A great deal of my time and effort is expended to finding the truths and spiritual realities. Thank you for being there for prisoners who want a different life even if they never get out of prison again, but can be more free then they ever have been. *Lonnie, Umatilla, OR*

I am very grateful for your help during my incarceration and feel that not only have you helped me become truly self-aware, you have also helped align me with a spiritual path that leads to self-mastery and has changed my way of thinking to help me be a more productive member of society that knows the divinity within and the responsibility that comes along with that power.

I am now down to less than five months on my sentence and am wondering what I could do once I'm out to help you in this great work. *Gabriel, Chipley, FL*

The newsletter was awe-inspiring for those awakening and provided an overview of insights which may be learned from the books the society offers. I can tell from everything you sent, this organization is beyond talking about the need to show and teach others about the gift (of mind) which God has sent. And rather shows through Steiner's great work that it is a prize we human souls may win, and move onward and upward into spirit. May the deep indwelling peace be with you all. The circle of heaven is ours, *David, El Reno, OK*

I do know in faith all's well with you. I appreciate all your actions and energy in connection to all your sacrifices to help us all gain greater knowledge upon our spiritual paths. As of now, all well with me. Staying focused and getting ready for my transition back to society. *Sheldon, Bowling Green FL*

These past couple of years with the help of your outreach I have went through much of a transformation from the person I was before. Many of Rudolf Steiner's writings have confirmed preexisting notions I had that had left me feeling the odd ball out. I have also learned much, and meditations upon his writings have probably saved me much time, maybe even an incarnation in what it would have taken me to receive this light on my own. I have found ways to absorb these teachings in my everyday practical life. They have helped motivate me to seek education in other areas of living to maintain a well-balanced and more spiritually developed being. *Jonathon, New Castle, IN*

Thank you once again for the great and inspiring books, and thank you for your great help, efforts and service and thank you for believing in me. *Cory, Coleman, FL*

I will be getting released next month. I will be continuing my spiritual practice as I work to unlock my brain's potential, increasing the percentage of it I use. Therefore, allowing more "mind" to be present. I believe that the more of your brain you can activate, the more "mind" can come through. This is spiritual evolution, and it can be advanced forward in a number of ways. I do wish to keep contact with you and hope to meet others who are "awakened" and "Awakening". I wish to join a society of like-minded beings and associate myself with the same. I have changed inside and it radiates outward, so my energy will attract those types. Then I would have someone to grow with and share my world, as we unfold our divine power and realize our true potential. I appreciate the Anthroposophical Prison Outreach for loaning me great material. Your books have added knowledge to my mental library and sharpened my perspective and perception. *M. J., Green Castle, IN*

If you would like to submit an article for publication please submit by:
March 30
for our next issue

ARTHURIAN KNIGHTS, GRAIL COMMUNITY, AND PARZIVAL

By Brian Gray

Rudolf Steiner reveals that the human being consists of three parts: body, soul and spirit - and that particular periods of history reflect different stages of their development. During our lifetime, each 7-year phase of our biography mirrors a period of historical development. As we explore each developmental phase historically and biographically, we enter into the mysteries of the Arthurian and Grail streams and the mission of Parzival.

The period of Atlantis (culminating with the Flood or Ice Ages) brought the *physical body* (human form and senses) to a level of development. Today, our physical body emerges from the womb at birth accompanied by the breaking of waters, reminiscent of the Flood. Our physical body develops most rapidly up to the change of teeth - from conception and birth to age 7.

Ancient India (7227 BC - 5067 BC) brought the life body (*etheric body*) to a new stage of development. Between ages 7 to 14 our rhythmic system, growth and life processes stabilize and the child's movement becomes more rhythmically coordinated.

Ancient Persia (5067 BC - 2907 BC) brought the soul body (*astral body* - our inner consciousness reflecting outer bodily conditions) to maturity. Between ages 14 to 21 teenagers develop a rich inner life based on sympathy and antipathy toward different aspects of the sense world.

The *physical body*, *etheric body* and *astral body* constitute our *three bodily members* of the human being. There follow *three soul stages* of historical and biographical development, during which our individuality or "I" more fully emerges.

The period of Ancient Egypt/Chaldea/Babylon (2907 BC - 747 BC) brought forth the human sentient soul. Within our sentient soul we experience stimulating sensations and inner experiences of joy and sorrow, pleasure and displeasure; and we respond to instinctive cravings with our feelings, thoughts and impulses. Within our sentient soul we harbor and reflect upon inner longings and desires that seek fulfillment within the sense world, initially between ages 21 to 28; but some soul cravings often continue throughout life.

During the Greco/Roman/Medieval period (747 BC - 1413 AD), the *heart-mind soul* began to unfold within society's ability to weigh, balance and form inner judgments through the activity of thinking-feeling and discernment. The entry of the Christ into humanity quietly kindled our individual sense of "I". Inner certainty emerged as faith or feeling-knowing within the human heart. Between ages 28 to 35, the inner capacity to weigh and judge impartially develops within our individual heart-mind soul.

Since the Renaissance, human beings are striving to develop the *consciousness soul* (1413 AD - 3573 AD) in which each individual human being can seek authentic spiritual insight into the deeper meaning of life and death, and act accordingly. This independent capacity dawns between ages 35 to 42, yet we continue developing the consciousness soul for the rest of our life. Our striving for spiritual experiences that bear truth, beauty and goodness expresses gradual maturing within the consciousness soul, as does a shift away from personal sympathy and antipathy towards greater compassion, forgiveness and love for others.

In lectures of 1913 titled *The Mysteries of the East and of Christianity*¹, Rudolf Steiner described mysteries of initiation and reincarnation. An initiate is one whose organs of spiritual perception have been opened to serve humanity, assisted by benevolent spirits. When an initiate reincarnates later in history, streams of initiation must recapitulate earlier initiation experiences in order for the initiate to 'catch up' and move human development forward.

For example, initiation experiences undergone during the *age of the sentient soul* (2907 BC - 747 BC) reappeared later as the mysteries of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Early initiation experiences from the *age of the heart-mind soul* (747 BC - 1413 AD) reappeared after the time of

Christ as the mysteries of the Grail. Initiation experiences yet to be undergone during the current *age of the consciousness soul* (1413 - 3573 AD) appear as the mysteries of Parzival's trials and initiation. Rudolf Steiner's research brings new insights of these mysteries and their meaning for our time.

King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table represent a pre-Christian mystery stream whose initiates perceived the Cosmic Christ working from the Sun sphere into the kingdoms of nature. Members of this ancient mystery stream beheld spiritual beings in the Sun and starry heavens sending their living activity into the streaming sunlight, rainbow mists, flowing waters and crystalline formations around Tintagel, Arthur's birthplace. "Arthur" was the title given to leading initiates of this stream connected with the Sun Archangel Michael, who directs Cosmic Intelligence and mystery wisdom to humanity. The name 'Arthur' refers in part to Arcturus, brightest star in the northern heavens, located in the constellation of Boötes. Arcturus is found in the night sky by following the arc of stars that form the handle of the Big Dipper. Arcturus appears to guide or direct the seven stars of the Big Dipper (part of Ursa Major, the Great Bear); the Greeks called it the "bear driver" or Plowman who drives oxen around the celestial north pole.

The Arthurian stream's activity culminated during the period ruled by the Archangel Michael, from 600 BC to 246 BC. During this same period, new impulses arose in philosophy, the arts and science in ancient Greece through Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Alexander and others. The Arthurian stream's activity in Europe coincides with the period of new culture arising in Greece, inspired by Michael.

Michael rules over Cosmic Intelligence - the Divine Wisdom and knowledge of the working of all spiritual beings throughout each stage of creation. The Archangel Michael directs this Wisdom to human beings so that we can comprehend it and begin to participate as co-creators, and eventually realize our potential role as Spirits of Freedom and Love. Michael is the great benefactor of humanity - the Sun being who makes Cosmic Intelligence available as human intelligence.

In serving the Cosmic Christ, Michael helped prepare humanity for the descent of the Christ into humankind and the Earth. As Christ descended from the Sun into the body of Jesus at the Baptism, and united with the Earth during the Crucifixion, Michael witnessed the Cosmic Intelligence descending from the Sun into the hearts and minds of human beings on Earth. Cosmic Intelligence gradually fell away from Michael's dominion:

"Michael who has been striving from the Sun for those on Earth who perceive the spiritual in the cosmos, desires henceforward to establish his citadel in the hearts and in the souls of human beings on Earth. This is to be present in our age. Christianity is to be guided into a realm of deeper truths inasmuch as understanding of Christ as a Sun Being is to arise within humanity through Michael, the Sun Spirit who has always ruled over the Intelligence, who can now no longer administer it in the cosmos but desires in future times to administer it in and through the hearts of human beings."²

Arthurian and Grail streams arose in service to Michael and the Cosmic Christ. Legends do not always describe them clearly:

"From the accounts contained in historical documents it will not be easy to form a true conception of the tasks and the mission of King Arthur and his Round Table, as it is called. But this becomes possible when one stands on the actual site of the castle [at Tintagel] and gazes with the eye of spirit over the stretch of sea which an intervening cliff seems to divide in two. There, in a comparatively short time, one can perceive a wonderful interplay between the light and the air, but also between the elemental spirits living in light and air. One can see spirit-beings streaming to the Earth in the rays of the Sun,



The 12 Beings of the Sidereal Zodiac

1 Steiner, Rudolf. *Mysteries of the East and of Christianity*. Rudolf Steiner Press, 1972.

2 Steiner, Rudolf. *Karmic Relationships*, Volume VIII. Rudolf Steiner Press, 2015, p. 36.

one can see them mirrored in the glittering raindrops; one can see that which comes under the sway of earthly gravity appearing in the air as the denser spirit-beings of the air. Again, when the rain ceases and the rays of the Sun stream through the clear air, one perceives the elemental spirits intermingling in quite a different way. There one witnesses how the Sun works in earthly substance ... one is filled with a kind of pagan 'piety' – not Christian but pagan piety, which is something altogether different. Pagan piety is a surrender of heart and feeling to the manifold spiritual beings working in the processes of nature....

"In the days of King Arthur and those around him, special conditions were required in order that the spirituality so wondrously revealed and borne in by the sea might flow into their mission and their tasks.... to take hold of the spirit-forces working there in nature would have been beyond the power of *one* individual alone. A group of human beings was necessary, one of whom felt himself as the representative of the Sun at the center, and whose twelve companions were trained in such a way that in temperament, disposition and manner of acting, all of them together formed a twelvefold whole – twelve individuals grouped as the Zodiacal constellations are grouped around the Sun. Such was the Round Table: King Arthur at the center, surrounded by the Twelve, above each of whom a Zodiacal symbol was displayed, indicating the particular cosmic influence with which he was associated. Civilizing forces went out from this place to Europe.... to battle with the wild, demonic powers of old still dominating large masses of the population, and drive them out of men. Under the guidance and direction of King Arthur, these Twelve were battling for outer civilization.... the Twelve under the direction of King Arthur were essentially a Michael-community, belonging to the age when Michael still administered the Cosmic Intelligence."³

The Arthurian stream emerged from an older nature-oriented Hibernian mystery stream that included Irish, Germanic and Celtic initiates. It worked longer than any other to ensure the Michael should retain dominion of the Cosmic Intelligence. The Arthurian mysteries flowed from West toward the East. However, a different, more inward stream emerged in the mysteries of the Grail that originated in the Holy Land and flowed from East to West:

"At another place this Arthur-Michael stream has its polar contrast: the Grail stream of which the Parsifal legend tells. This other stream comes into being at a place where a more inward form of Christianity had taken refuge. In the Grail stream too we have the Twelve around the One, but account is everywhere taken of the fact that the Intelligence, the Intelligence-filled thoughts, no longer flow as Revelations from the heavens to the Earth; what has now streamed downward seems, in face of earthly thoughts, to be like the "pure fool" – Parsifal. It is realized here that the Intelligence must now be sought within the earthly sphere alone."⁴

The impulse within the Arthur stream was to seek the Cosmic Christ within the rays of the Sun; but the task of the Grail stream was to find the Cosmic Christ that has come down to Earth to dwell within the hearts of human beings. The spiritual essence of the Sun must now be found within earthly evolution – that is the message of the Grail stream. Its founder was Titurel, who received the Grail after the Christ event. Titurel's leadership passed gradually to his son Frimutel, and then to Anfortas, firstborn grandson of Titurel.

However, members of the Grail stream experience a dire tragedy taking place within the heart-mind soul of human beings. Rudolf

Steiner describes how, within this 'middle' part of the human soul – the heart-mind soul (sometimes translated as 'intellectual soul'), – a rift arises, a rift that allows adversarial beings to establish a foothold and open the soul to doubt and a feeling of being 'torn in two.' Goethe has Faust state this painful rift within the heart-mind soul with these words:

Two souls alas! are dwelling in my breast;
And each is fain to leave its brother.
The one, fast clinging, to the world adheres
With clutching organs, in love's sturdy lust;
The other strongly lifts itself from dust
To yonder high, ancestral spheres.⁵

Noble Goethe was spiritually inclined, yet his autobiography reveals that he continually wrestled with his lower, 'human, all-too-human' side that pulled him into the depths of lust and desire. According to Rudolf Steiner, this rift within the heart-mind soul of human beings will continue to widen with each succeeding generation, and each human being must find a way to heal this rift through aligning with Michael and the Christ through the Wisdom of the Grail. In earlier times, human beings bore integrity and did not easily deviate from acting out of virtue. Today, however, each human being deals with a 'dying' part of the etheric and physical body once suffused with vitality through spiritual perception. As we human beings have lost perception of the spiritual world that we had in former lives, the 'deadened' parts of our etheric body and physical body are readily subjected to severe temptations by adversarial beings.

Such was the condition of Anfortas, the Grail King whose passions led to his being wounded in the testicles by the poisonous spear of the black magician Klingschor. Lamed and languishing in pain, Anfortas had to wait for compassion to awaken in Parzival – the 'pure fool' who slowly went through stages of *dullness* (apathy, disinterest in the world) and *doubt*

(indecision) into the capacity to *bless* and heal others. Parzival's first visit to the Grail Castle was disastrous, and it took nearly five years before he was able to return and heal the suffering Anfortas and become Grail King.

How did Parzival undergo his initiation? Wolfram describes how Parzival, after being ejected from the Grail Castle, sought the way back both day and night. Guided by advice from the wise hermit Trevrizent, Parzival was slowly initiated into the mysteries of nature by day and into the mysteries of the stars by night. His "I" reawakened slumbering capacities in his sentient soul and heart-mind soul and developed new faculties in his consciousness soul, and healed Anfortas with the compassion and love awakened by Christ.

King Arthur's Round Table addresses mysteries of the *sentient soul*; faithful to Michael and the Cosmic Christ as Sun-Hero, Arthurians serve the Sun mysteries revealed in nature and star mysteries of the Zodiac. The Grail stream addresses mysteries of the *heart-mind soul*; Titurel's companions serve Christ within human hearts and minds, as the divine "I" slowly awakens to compassion and love. Parzival enters mysteries of the *consciousness soul*, heroically uniting Arthurian and Grail streams by transforming his *dullness* and *doubt* an achieving the *ability to bless and heal the wounded Anfortas*.

Today, every human being is a Parzival. May we each transform our dullness and doubt through Wisdom and Love of the Christ.

*Divine Light,
Christ-Sun
Warm
Our hearts;
Enlighten
Our heads;

That good may become
What we
From our hearts will to found
What we
From our heads will to guide
Purposefully.*

-Rudolf Steiner⁶

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3 Ibid., pp. 38-39.

4 Ibid., p. 39.

5 Goethe, Wolfgang von. *Faust*. Translated by George Madison Priest.

6 Steiner, Rudolf. *The Foundation Stone Verse*, fourth panel.

Book Reviews



An Outline of Esoteric Science Rudolf Steiner

Esoteric Science is clearly meant for an advanced occult scientist, but a beginner can grasp it as well by how Steiner has pieced it together. As I am a disciple in the Rosicrucian fellowship and thirty-five years of occult science in study and practice, this book delves deep into the soul's growth, giving a detailed explanation on the different bodies. Mainly how the etheric body links the soul and physical bodies together. Steiner has expressed a brilliant combination of western and eastern teachings to touch on the subject. Where most see it as either western or eastern and cast off the other, Steiner has captured a true connection between these two very different teachings, and has given a powerful foundation for thought on the soul's evolution on its incarnations as well as the evolution of our solar system. Again, Steiner brings the heavenly bodies of our solar system to prove his theories and how the human civilizations evolved, thus *Esoteric Science* explains the evolution of life in its entirety, a powerful piece of work that requires patience in study and an open mind to grasp its great truth. *Darrin, Pontiac IL*

Ancient Myths and the New Isis Mystery Rudolf Steiner

In *Ancient Myths and the New Isis Mystery*, Steiner examines Greek and Egyptian myths with an eye to the consciousness of the peoples who constructed them. From his uncanny ability to examine the consciousness of ancient peoples in various epochs he is able to gain and then share insights into the truths of their spirituality. He stresses that it is imperative that we come to regain this spirituality in order to advance and evolve. He explains that we need to open ourselves to the kind of consciousness our ancestors had; not just with our head using the kind of abstract thinking which is held in such high regard in modern times, but with our heart as heart-knowledge, opening our soul to it. He also connects ancient forms of consciousness (intuition, inspiration, imagination) to certain elements of the alchemists from the Middle Ages. What I really like about these lectures and this book is that the esoteric concepts Steiner shares are not presented in a vacuum divorced from mundane reality. He emphasizes that we need to pay attention and be observant in a very un-superficial way to what is happening on earth now. He displays a deep understanding of the current events of his time and exhorts us to gain a correct understanding of all things earthly and spiritual, past and present so that we may properly orient ourselves in the world today. This idea of incorporating the spiritual with the mundane is a very important theme in the book. One which I believe can lean toward much fulfillment in our lives. *Paul, Tehachapi, CA*

The Power of Now Eckhart Tolle

Eckhart Tolle's book, *The Power of Now*, is easy to read and comprehend, and contains a life changing spiritual truth. Most of us rarely live in the moment, or reality for that matter. We spend the entire day living in memories of the past which are ephemeral and change with each recollection, or we spend it anticipating future scenarios. In short, we are living in our minds! Reading this book teaches us to break the pattern of behavior and experience the fullness and living spirit of the present moment (without sacrificing critical thinking). *Jason, Tennessee Colony, TX*

Astronomy and Astrology Rudolf Steiner

For those who study astrology, this text explains how the natal chart of great people (such as Jesus and Buddha) were. Our life is defined, or influenced, by the position of the stars at birth, also known as our natal chart. This "snapshot" is then read for meaning. Unlike normal people, the charts of the Great Ones are more like a movie, instead of a picture. Another great thing I learned was how the twelve signs manifest themselves in our bodies at birth. The way the classes of the signs, Capricorn as the Tiller, was also a great lesson. I highly recommend this book for all who are searching for answers in the stars. *Roger, Brunswick, NC*

The Soul's Long Journey Edward Reaugh Smith

For those who doubt the reality of reincarnation based on religious grounds, especially Christians, this book offers a well-grounded opening of the eyes to the Bible's teachings about reincarnation. The book starts with a chapter called *The Journey Concept*. Edward Smith writes, "The idea (of a journey) can arise that what takes place between that beginning (of the Bible, Genesis) and ending (Revelations) is a long journey." This is a different way of reading the Bible. The Bible is an interior journey that we live every day in our lives. The Bible, not as a historical book, but a mystical journey of the soul. He goes on to write about "Karma as the Law Christ Came to Fulfill". That "Law" has to do with forgiveness. Karma is just another name for "cause and effect". Anything we do or think has an effect on ourselves and others, the cosmos. If we do "wrong" we need to set it "right" in this lifetime or another. If like Jesus said, we need to pay up to the last cent of our debts, some of those debts cannot be "paid" in only one life or if it could, many times we won't, so we need to come back to pay the full amount of our debts. If for example we had hurt 100 people, we need to come back to help 100 people out of suffering. Edward Smith writes: "When we accept Christ, he takes this spiritual world karma upon his shoulders, pays that debt so to speak [...] but as noted, scripture admonishes that we must pay our just earthly debts to others." So there is a difference, we are redeemed from paying the debt to the spiritual world, to God, to Cosmos, but we have a debt to others and we must never run away from those debts, as Christians or as spiritual beings of any philosophy or religion, we cannot run away from making good what we have done wrong. Then Smith goes to present a long list of places in the Bible that will support a belief in reincarnation, from Job to the Gospels. Of special significant is Jeremiah 1, 4-5. "Now the word of the Lord comes to me saying, 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.'" Also the wisdom book of the Bible whereas wisdom, presented always as a female character is said to be with God since the beginning and also John's Gospel about the logos being with God. In fact, there are hundreds of passages in the Bible that talk about reincarnation. I recommend this book to everyone, especially those of us in prison because reincarnation gives us hope to another life where we can pay our debts not by punishment, but by righting things and that is the Hope of all hopes. *Ruben, White Deer, PA*

Art and Poetry

Sometimes
when the air
is still
we must
man the oars
to get
to where
the water
takes us



Steve, Ione, CA

During the quietness
I can imagine the like that is
formed by the heavens
and...in that stillness

I become closer to the
knowledge that regulates life

But once all has been set in
motion

All becomes lost

lost in the commotion of
the day to day necessities of
survival

lost within time that
separates days turning into
nights

As I bear witness to the
beauty of the sunrise and
sunset

My heart is suddenly
overwhelmed by a
mysterious joy

from witnessing the beauty
of beginnings and ends

But as soon as dawn
becomes day and dusk
becomes night

I become the victim of the
envious, the jealous, the
greedy, the lustful

and...and the struggle to
mortify my being

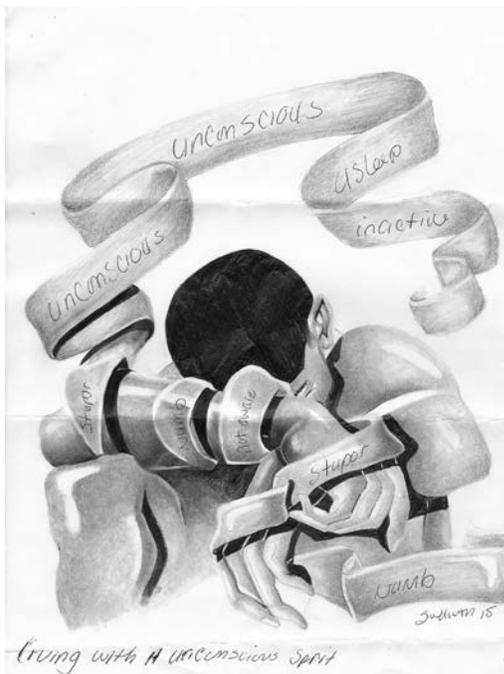
This has set my mind and
heart amongst fields of
beautiful flowers

and under the brilliant
colors and hues of the sky

But...has brought my spirit
to a shore of uncertainty
a shore surrounded by an
ocean

an ocean filled with
approaching battleships of
war

Jimmy, Winnfield, LA



*Living with an Unconscious Spirit
Michael, Joliet, IL*

My Candle Experience

The candle's flame reaches to the sky
to reunite itself with the divine flame
that is the source of all yet no form of its own
without limit, without end, without beginning.

The flame signifies the microcosm
it reaches for the macrocosm.

The wax is the earth that melts yet is formed again.
The process—light is struck that is oxidized by air,
it touches earth that forms water, liquid earth.

The flame hovers above the wax, it is the process
That the four elements perform in working together
in a state of balance, harmony and union.

All exist but not without the other.

Jason, Florence, CO

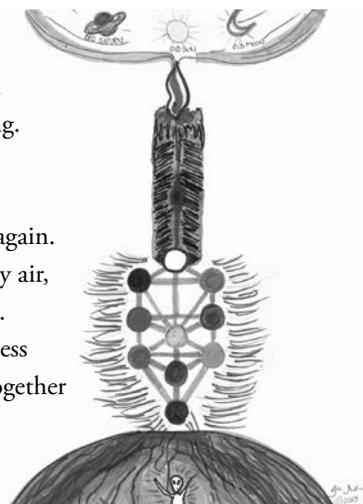


*Eagle
(made with coffee
and twisted tissue)
Jeremy,
Crawfordville, FL*

In my sleep I felt the love of God,
flowing like the sea.

I saw the universe extending from inside of me.
I never knew something could be so beautiful
In my dream I saw your love light,
It was bright and extremely wonderful.
Sometimes a dream can be reality
I felt Christ's love inside of me.

George, Stockton, CA



Meditations

Prayer and meditation is like weeding the garden and watching the fruit and veggies grow! I feel like I'm being changed up, I'm on a path, and I'm looking to see if this is real enough to really accept and engage in. I know now that I need to address some weak areas; controlling thought, strengthening my will. Prayer and meditation has given me confidence and amazing peace. I am becoming something wonderful.

Clinton, Fort Stockton, TX

Through meditation I have learned patience and how not to "auto react". *Kerry, Lake City, FL*

Helps calm raging thoughts; anger, etc. Doing the six exercises helps calm and tends to motivate one to think things through and view things differently. *Carl, Calico Rock, AZ*

Meditation is the key to the doorway of a positive change. *Ricardo, Ione, CA*

I meditate every morning and every night for at least ten minutes. I am more in tune with myself and aligned with the universe, I stay in a euphoric state, and am able to make better decisions. I've done the exercise in focusing on one item, like a pencil, and it has given me better concentration on other tasks, like reading and writing, for longer periods of time.

Brendan, Live Oak, FL

Meditation has given me greater control over my feelings and responses to others. *Anthony, Henning, TN*

Meditation creates a great temporary escape from the negativity of prison and has helped me to find ways of coping

with stress effectively. Six exercises: My thinking is more organized. I am able to focus on one thought and I am able to think things through more carefully.

Gary, Tennessee Colony, TX

Yes, I meditate at least 3-5 times a week. It's helped me with anger, depression, and anxiety. It's also allowed me to forge a connection with myself and the divine. *Luke, Ionia, MI*

I meditate daily, sometimes for three to four minutes, other times maybe ten to twenty. For me, meditation has increased harmony. *Ke'Ondra, Grady, AR*

Meditation helps relieve stress and enables me to think clearly. It helps in controlling my feelings through poems and art. Many times when feeling oppressed, I channel my energy in these constructive ways. *Damian, Raiford, FL*

I did those six meditative exercises in jail which was probably the most growthful period in my life (11 months). They were clearly a part of that growth. *John, Lompoc, CA*

Since I'm temporarily in a lockup cell for a couple weeks now, I've been meditating every day, and love the personal space to do so without disturbances (mostly). It's hard for me otherwise with these conditions. *Daniel, Huntsville, TX*

I mostly meditate early in the morning. Some days I don't, but most of the time I try to every morning when it's real quiet on the wing. It makes me more humble and receptive to the universe. I feel calm and at peace when I come out.

Gregory, Punta Gorda, FL

~ So What's Your Experience? ~

We welcome your comments on previous newsletter articles

Traces of the Mysteries in Modern Life and The Ancient Mysteries (Issue 23)

Know that I am thoroughly pleased with the books I received. It so happens that they coincide with the focus as you wrote in the spring 2015 newsletter on The Mysteries. The authors of the newsletter articles and these books did a remarkable job of presenting several streams of ancient teachings in an easily digestible form for novices such as myself. I believe the reason you are seeing a prevalent interest in The Mysteries by the prisoners is the desire for transformation held out by the Mystery system—the desire to transition to something more. I believe that imprisonment can be perceived as a death and burial corresponding to a stage on the path. While in this 'death' state, we are to receive instruction and come in contact with the spiritual, i.e. APO. And hope someday to emerge into the light of day. *Horace, Beeville, TX*

The newsletter articles gave me a more profound insight into ancient mysteries and how the old and new are forever connected. *Kenneth, Huntsville, TX*

What New Ways of Thinking, Feeling, and Willing are you Applying?

MY THOUGHTS ARE MORE about participating in uplifting and educating the lost; my feelings are inspired to continue working towards that cause. I work harder than before.

Andrell, Joliet, IL

I LOOK AT LIFE as a more positive gift. I don't hate everything anymore. *Richard, Susanville, CA*

THINKING: I THINK about thinking to cultivate awareness of what I feel and what I'm about to do. **Feeling:** more patient, heeding any rush and impulse as a surplus of options that thinking of quickly presents more time to choose what's best to do. *Domenic, Waynesburg, PA*

MY MIND IS MORE DISCIPLINED, focusing my thoughts of good. My feelings are more balanced with my thoughts and deeds. My doing is more "naturally" controlled, being aware of that and trying to come without my volatile control. *Eric, Palestine, TX*

IT BOILS DOWN TO ONENESS. I am beginning to see the interconnectedness of everything, even of one's thoughts. I feel freer and have more compassion for people. In just the past few months, my patience with/for people has increased, less bothers me. *Zachary, Union Springs, AL*

I THINK MORE on what I'm doing now, not yesterday or tomorrow. Focus on the issues of now. I feel good about my surroundings, when all is transitory. The difference now is this great peace of mind. *Armando, San Quentin, CA*

TO MOVE FORWARD on the path to higher self and advance in the spiritual cosmos, we must therefore pay careful attention to our thoughts and feelings as we do our movements in the physical world. *Johnny, Milton, FL*

DAILY I OBSERVE my mind and make it my prerogative to only think positive thoughts, because from that one action, it brings upon my being a good positive feeling and out of that I bring forth a positive good action. So no matter what negative situation comes my way, I could still find the good that is in it. Through life one then starts to realize that whenever a negative energy makes an appearance, one can use it to learn something good out of it. Once you start to look upon life in that order of fashion, every day of your life is an afterthought to existence. *Carlos, Menard, IL*

I'VE BEEN IN THIS GROWTH PROCESS from the beginning of this time. My thinking process has changed and feelings are improved and daily disciplines have improved. *William, Bushnell, FL*

I'M STAYING MORE POSITIVE and trying to be optimistic about things despite the afflictions that come my way. *Alex, Tehachapi, CA*

MY THINKING IS PURER because I understand now that we are all good in our essence, which makes me feel good about myself and others. I do the right thing mostly today. *Chad, Crawfordville, FL*



One
The beginning of a
long journey is this life.
To truly find oneself is
one of our purposes, so
that we can prepare for
the next level. This pain,
this adversity we face,
Should only be a wakeup
call, a compass, the
navigator
to our true destination.
The true source, the truth,
Is within us, and we
within it. So stop—and
just listen, for it has been
calling since your existence.
Close your eyes and see
what you've been missing,
for it's right there, you,
One.

Ricardo, Ione, CA

SELF AWAKENINGS

EduCareDo Correspondence Course Response Summaries

Lesson #1: Introduction

I didn't know Rudolf Steiner had so many lectures and books written. I now know that anthroposophy is really the way that you look at humanity. Polarities were new to me because to look at the opposite instead of moral or immoral, is better because it's like looking at the other side of yourself. No one is perfect and polarities will teach you to look at both sides instead of going with one. The fact that I can be more aware and more conscious about what life really means. How we live and judge ourselves and humanity. Anthroposophy is a path *of* knowledge, not *to* knowledge. Learning to cope with my mistakes and really get a life-learning experience, even in a bad situation. *Gjuan, Tutwiler, MS*

Lesson #6: The Threefold Human Constitution and Control of Thinking

It was an incredible revelation for me to learn that there was a way for me to exercise my mind like this. I was also wowed by the discovery that everything is Trinitarian. I especially liked the exercises, plus the discovery that everything is Trinitarian. I'll keep practicing. With new insight, I take in the world, inhaling deep as if to breathe its textures, tastes, sights, and sounds along with its scents. I am finding truth. What was once divined, independent, and autonomous—now cohesive, cogent, and collective. There is trinity in all things and all things within trinity. I am finding truth. *Christopher, Valdosta, GA*

Lesson #7: The Human Being in its Relationship to the World

In lesson seven, human beings in relationship to the world says that the senses perceive, the soul feels it, and the spirit recognizes it. I learned about the threefold aspects of thinking past experiences, feelings are now experiences, and willing, which takes us to the future. The most important for me was the process of metamorphosis, the development of polarities through intensification to fulfillment in stages, i.e. a caterpillar metamorphoses into a butterfly in stages relinquishing one stage for another higher existence. This lesson relates to the perceptive power of thought, the passive onlooker perceiving a thing in one perception and a totally new way of seeing things by way of the participating consciousness [of] the phenomenology process. Observation shows that polarity achieves a progressive development, in order for this progression to happen there must be a regression in the previous stage of development. In conclusion, this threefoldness extends into the world and to all living beings. *Alan, Nelsonville, OH*

Lesson #8: The Human Being and the Four Kingdoms of Nature

The four kingdoms are pieces of me. From death to sleep, how the animal world is a part of the element of air, the soul, and dreamlike. The four elements are separated by the four worlds, yet the physical body is a part of them all. Important to me was the ability to free the "I" out of the bondage of earthly, material laws since through warmth it masters them. The development of understanding our nature frees us to achieve our full potential to know a higher state of consciousness. I will view the colors of things in this world and ask myself what energies these colors represent and how my own energy creates these same colors. I will perform the exercises daily, taking note of how they are helping change my thought process. *Jason, Florence, CO*

Lesson #9: Development and Care of the Four Members of the Human Being

What I found really new was that artistic qualities in drawing and painting can lead from picture to concept idea. The most important thing about this lesson is that if a person doesn't raise a child right then the child struggles later on down the line in life. So what's important to me is that all parents need to know this learning. I've got to start with myself. While doing this study I've seen something that made me understand some of my own challenges in life. I have to work on my proper balance sense and also, me being dyslexic, sometimes I see things the other way around, but I don't let it stop me or slow me down. *Johnathon, Huntsville, TX*

Lesson #12: Experiments with Elements, Ethers, and their Effects...

The inner workings of a human being were new to me (therefore, this wisdom of the moving water helps to maintain both our inner life and the outer life in nature). The highly developed phlegmatic is well organized, brings structure and related entities into measured relationships, good with numerical work, brings harmony and order, and is honest and dependable. The real backbone of a community. I will try to have a more caring heart and open mind about spiritual science and how to use that care and openness to better myself and be kind to others. *Mario, McAlester, OK*

Lesson #13: Experiments with Elements, Ethers, and their Effects...

I learned in this lesson that although fire and warmth both originate from Old Saturn and have a time component, they exist in intensive movements in time. However fire deals with the past and warmth with the future. Fire disappears and dies into the past, warmth brings things to existence in the future. We exist in the present because of the past and future. For me, the experiment with the rainbow was closest to my heart. The colors are beautiful however the meaning behind the rainbow always touches me and makes me remember what's important. I'm gonna share the meaning/importance of the rainbow with others, and then ask them to do the experiment. *Tamika, Ypsilanti, MI*

Lesson #14: Review of the First Half Year

I learned in this lesson, like the majority of the lessons, that we must strive to be complete. We are not nouns, finished objects, but more like verbs and our development mostly depends on us. I also acknowledged all the developments of Mr. Steiner. The radical concepts of social politics and economic reforms interest me. The concerns the evolution of humanity and that a path is being indicated, and a way of living being offered which can lead the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe. *Reginald, Doral, FL*

Lesson #18: The Arts and their Mission, Living Words

What was really new to me in this lesson is that with each experiment (that I'm able to conduct) I get different reactions each time. Such as the experiment on page 5; I reestablish my spirit balance with music, but receive different responses at different times. But I am able to differentiate after conducting the experiment so many times. What was closest to my heart was the creative speech lessons. They are working magic with my psyche and manifesting positive results into my consciousness. *Robert, Richmond, TX*

Lesson #19: Ecological-Social-Economy, Part 1 of 2

What was really new to me was how my ability to listen, or rather my inability to listen, deeply affects others. What I found most important in this lesson is that we have to change, not "them". It makes me feel empowered that by transforming my thinking, feeling, and willing, I'm not only making a difference in myself, but in the world. I intend to use the exercises concerning surveying my life for developing a feeling of indebtedness to all who have helped me or hurt me, and the exercise of objectifying my past selves. *Carl, McAlester, OK*

Lesson #21: Introduction to Biography Work

What was new to me was the definition of Biography. I never looked at biography in such terms as life writing, which brings a new understanding to the meaning of it. I enjoyed Exercise 1, because all our life people come in and out, yet we never pay much attention to each encounter to understand its meaning. Everything and everyone brushes our life at a designed time and designed purpose; it is upon us to see the significance. I will be mindful of the encounters in my life to see the purpose of them to my spiritual evolution, or my assisting with the evolution of the one being encountered. Life has a particular design which is written in the everyday, manifesting a pattern of consciousness that evolves in varying stages of the individual human being. It is upon us to track our life pattern to bring into consciousness our higher selves. Once the stages have been brought into realization we can now see how to affect those around us to assist in their spiritual development in whatever stage they may be in. The knowledge of our time is important to our life process. *Steve, Menard, IL*

Lesson #24: Health and Nutrition

It's new for me knowing how, through nutrition, we establish a close relationship to the spiritual. Closest to my heart was our sincerity and gratitude when we say, by mouth, mind, or heart (speaking, thinking, or feeling) a prayer at every meal. I will exert a more conscious attitude on my daily food, thinking, feeling, and showing gratitude and pleasure. All the information about good nutrition is very valuable for me and, of course, for everyone else. Being informed, having the right knowledge about nutrition is needed everywhere, by everyone at any time or place, no matter race or social position. To be healthy must be a goal for everybody, since every one of us does not want to get sick, but the problem for many is the lack of discipline on their ways of eating. The temptation to succumb to any opportunity to eat is very strong, and many fail at this test. *Eric, Palestine, TX*



WHAT ARE THE FRUITS OF ANTHROPOSOPHY FOR YOU?

IT'S GIVEN ME deep insight and understanding to things that were once hard to understand. *John, Soledad, CA*

I'VE ONLY READ two books so far, but from just those two I've learned a lot, and they gave me a feeling of hope and love that transcends the physical. *Carcellous, Milton, FL*

I DO NOT INTERACT with this world in the same way I used to, or anyone for that matter. I know that I am accountable in thought, speech, and action, so I try to guard myself at all times. I have had answers to questions from the Divine. I have seen the reaction of the law when I was wrong, and recognized it immediately. You cannot study this material and not notice change. This is what being born again is, but I have a ways to go. *Wayne, Richmond, TX*

IT HAS TAKEN MY MIND away from all the negative people or situations. Along with making me think more positive on a lot of things I used to see in a negative way. All in all, it's making me into a smarter, better person. *Robert, Delano, CA*

GROWING UP I WAS POLLUTED with ideas of racial supremacy. Through my studies of anthroposophy, I've come to see the interconnectedness of all of humanity as we together evolve into the Higher Beings we are. *Jonathon, Pendleton, IN*

ANTHROPOSOPHY HAS UNVEILED certain esoteric knowledge that I now use as a gauge to comprehend and isolate the occult rituals and experiences that have always taken place in my life. *Antwan, Milton, FL*

I CAME ACROSS THIS GLORIOUS illuminating path eleven years ago, in a time when my life was at a stage of mass confusion and helplessness. When I first read my first book from Steiner on the esoteric, I was amazed at its philosophy, and at once fascinated at its wisdom, and ever since then I've been a faithful member of the way of self-knowledge. *Carlos, Menard, IL*

THE LITTLE READING I have done in anthroposophy has taught me one thing: that I need to read more of Rudolf Steiner's material. The fruits it has yielded me are the confirmation of being on the right track on my research about reincarnation and our true spiritual reality. *Antonio, Perry, FL*

EVERY TIME I read about anthroposophy, it reminds me to slow down and really think about what's important. *Silas, Susanville, CA*

THE READING is great 'cause I enjoy philosophy and theology. In some ways it has centered me, honed my focus. *Richard, Tennessee Colony, TX*

I HAVE A MORE PEACEFUL MIND, and I have more altruistic love for humanity because we are not different from each other, we are all interconnected and one! *John, Cross City, FL*

SOME OF these studies, I've already known through my Native American/Buddhist culture. By studying anthroposophy, I've had a better understanding of my culture. *Aaron, Tennessee Colony, TX*

ANTHROPOSOPHY has compelled me to start striving for inner change. Positive inner change. *Jeffrey, Milton, FL*

I'VE LEARNED to be more open, assertive, without being controlling, or stressed. I've become smarter, more artistic, and matured. *Dwayne, Coalinga, CA*

IT HAS BROUGHT peace in the midst of the storm. It has helped me not be so judgmental toward others, and it's made me less egocentric, maybe a little more mature and compassionate. And most important, it's made me happy to know that I don't know everything and have much to learn. *Jeff, Crawfordville, FL*

I CAN SAY that I've found a great peace in my life and more joy in my heart. I get along better with both correctional staff and my fellow inmates. I'm no longer an angry person, nor do I believe that everyone is out to harm me in some way. *Nathan, Vacaville, CA*

APO HAS SENT ME books with information as if I was the author discovering my own much anticipated work. The fruits are budding with patience, compassion, forgiveness, clarity, self-control, focus, clairvoyance, courage, peace, vision, purpose, sensitivity, direction, hope, and faith. *Daniel, Daytona Beach, FL*

ANTHROPOSOPHY has given me understanding of life, and a way of life. *Nathaniel, Tennessee Colony, TX*

READING/STUDYING ANTHROPOSOPHY has led me to be more introspective and insightful, and has led me to a greater understanding of myself and others. *Eric, Blythe, CA*

IT'S MADE ME change my whole perspective on life. I stopped blaming others for my outcome and started taking responsibility for my actions. I am more at peace and humble. *Ruben, Raiford, FL*

- STEPPING ONTO THE PATH -

WHAT ATTRACTED ME was the opportunity to gain knowledge about my "self" and the experience in deep thought and meditations. *Michael, Cushing, OK*

I WANT SELF-MASTERY, peace of mind, heart, self love, patience, inner freedom, tools for self-discovery, wisdom, courage, strength, mental clarity, a higher vocabulary and better verbal expression, love for all things and people, higher ideals, understanding, humility, a feeling of accomplishment, a newfound sense of direction and goals, hope and inspiration, a spiritual practice. *William, Clifton, TN*

HONESTLY, THERE'S A MAN within my soul who I consider my true form of inner potential. He stares at me in the mirror. He comes alive when I sleep. But I am not that man yet. I want to become this mystical man. This sage, who knows me intimately, accepts my shortcomings, but shines with an inner brilliant light that heals with his radiance, and his powers embrace everything and transforms it with his inner strength and wisdom. *Micheal, Iowa Park, TX*

ANTHROPOSOPHY IS SOMETHING NEW, and from what I've read so far about the program, I'm willing to give it a shot. I want a better understanding of myself, and what triggers me to make the negative choices that land me in jails and prisons. Hopefully to learn a new way of living and gain resources that I can utilize once I am free. *BRADLEY, WASCO, CA*

I HOPE TO GAIN a better sense of self and how I can contribute to the world while in my current situation. *Victor, Milton, FL*

I'M INTERESTED IN THE CHANCE to develop my spirituality after years of searching for the truth; the knowledge of truth and inner peace, Greek and Christian philosophy, history, current events. I am perceptive of other people, able to learn others quickly. *Jason, Meridian, MS*

I READ YOUR BOOK LIST and realized that a lot of the questions and beliefs and thoughts about certain spiritual aspects seem to be addressed in these books. Spiritual insights, get in touch with my higher self, guidance and education, and live in the world(s) that exists beyond everyday life. *Michael, Westville, IN*

I'M REALLY INTERESTED IN eastern sciences, metaphysics, and ancient history. My skills are: I'm a good writer and a great poet. I hope to gain an insight on western sciences and an elevated consciousness. *Melvin, Sumner, IL*

I'M DRAWN TO THE CHANCE to be able to read spiritually based material without the religion along with the possibility to further my own achievements in spiritual practices. I would like the chance to broaden my personal points of view, along with gaining a higher understanding of mankind and his evolution and growth. *Jared, Woodville, TX*

I WANT TO KNOW EVERYTHING! I have visions in dreams. Your sayings help me so much to not fret. Anything and everything I possibly can enjoy, plus learn. This is what I've been needing all my life! It's just connecting the dots, per se. *Tina, Ocala, FL*

Inspired by your Reading

I just finished reading *Anthroposophy: A Concise Introduction to Rudolf Steiner's Spiritual Philosophy*. I was very interested in how the book showed me some of the important elements of Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy, how it attempts to shed light in the cosmic wisdom. Rudolf Steiner has given me some basic concepts which can serve as tools during this exciting trip. I wish to learn more how to handle these new tools so I can use them in everyday life. I wish to learn more of what anthroposophy can do to change my life. *Alexander, Huntsville, TX*

I have to admit I knew nothing, zero, about the Rosicrucian beliefs before I read this book, *Rosicrucian Wisdom*, and after I realized there is much more that I need to know in order to more fully grasp an understanding of it. I especially enjoyed the discussion about the law of destiny and giving me some guidelines on developing my spiritual vision. In *The Healing Power of Prayer*, Hans-Werner Schroeder is so right in this text to say there are definitely times in our lives that we all feel the need to turn to a power greater than ourselves for help. It is turning to prayer that we can call upon the power of prayer to God for help to restore us. The advice given on how to make prayer an integral part of our everyday life to keep our peace and harmony is something you just cannot put a price on. My prayer life has become more solid by reading this text. *Robin, Petersburg, VA*

For years I have been interested in what is termed *The Philosopher's Stone*. Prior to reading *The Alchemist*, I thought that it and the *Elixir of Life* were one and the same. I did not know they were two properties that held two isolated functions. I also never knew about the 'language of the universe', the 'soul of the world', nor about the 'personal legend'. I found all these things intriguing and interesting. I found myself wanting to embark on such a journey. *Germaine, Tennessee Colony, TX*

Thank you for the books you selected, they were a perfect introduction for what I'm searching for. Some of the lectures really shined a light on things that I've experienced from childhood and throughout my life, things such as visions, dreams and spiritual realities. It also defined and helped explain to me my own poetry and art. Now when I reread my poems and evaluate my art, I'm more in contact with a conscience that was alien to me. I also understand the influence that art, poems, and excerpts can have on life, I also now am aware of the importance it has on spiritual sciences, research and the awareness of the evolution of the soul. *Jimmy, Winnfield, LA*

I am so thankful for the books that you sent. *How to Know Higher Worlds* was very informative and contained a lot more than I thought it would. Usually those types of books promise much, but are vague, but this book delivered much, and also provided meditative exercises to help jump start the faculties. *Give Us This Day* was a wonderfully communicated book about the evolution of prayer and the different levels of prayer through different religious perspectives. These books were a wonderful read and I recommend them to anyone on the spiritual path. I appreciate all of the work that you all put into this prison outreach program and I want you to know that you have all impacted my life so much. *Brandon, Sneads, FL*

I am writing to thank you for your service and effort in sending the books. *Freemasonry and Ritual Work* helped shed light on Rudolf Steiner's works and how he contributed to promoting enlightenment to others for their betterment rather than his own. *Nathaniel, Beeville, TX*

I have finished *Rosicrucian Wisdom* and found a great deal of what I believe to be missing pieces to my current understandings of the esoteric teachings. It has always been my intention to attempt the seven stages of the Rosicrucian Method. I really

valued the simplicity in the way Steiner explained the fourfold man and the higher worlds. It is uncommon to find such things spoken of so plainly rather than hidden in alchemy or allegory. I hold firm to the belief that this is the foundation from which my core understanding must start and grow. I must understand or attempt to *gain* mastery over "how I function". This is the first step in my journey. I have begun reading *Anthroposophy* and already I have found clear examples of the second stage of the Rosicrucian Method, imaginative knowledge. *Eric, Bellefonte, PA*

I begin by saying thank you to each and every one of you. The work all of you do allows people like myself to get to know universal wisdom through the teachings of Rudolf Steiner. I'm sending back the books. *A Bright White Light* was absolutely amazing, it touched me on multiple levels. *The Paths of the Christian Mysteries* was good as well. I see and understand how Christ works with the Bodhisattvas that came before and after him. As an Odinist, or a fellow initiate of ancient wisdom, I always love to see the universe work, and how the message is taught, transferred, or received. *Kenneth, Carrabelle, FL*

Thank you for sending me these latest books, *Self Transformation* and *A Way of Self Knowledge*. The books that I have been studying by Rudolf Steiner have opened my eyes in a new light pertaining to the elements and insight of the chosen journey. *Hardesty, Rosharon, TX*

Although I got nutrients from all three of the books you so graciously sent, I must say my mind fed the most on *How to Know Higher Worlds* by Rudolf Steiner. I've experienced some of the things he mentioned in the stages of intuition. A lot of his ideas are confirmed by other cultures. This book is a Biblical classic. *Waldo, Florida City, FL*

The Templar Spirit answered some of my questions pertaining to the spiritual side of the Order. The historical insight provided made the mythological/allegorical aspects more rational, especially in regards to Baphomet. The knowledge of the three heads clarified other historical works that I have read but failed to close the gaps on that subject. *The Etheric Christ* opened up many avenues of thought in which I will now be traveling to find answers to many new questions. I found that many of my past contemplations were supported in the words of the writer. To see that some of my "own" thoughts are also those of such enlightened souls as Steiner is motivating to continue on the path. I look forward to the future unfolding that will take place within me. *Bruce, Victoria, VA*

The Fourfold Path to Healing is an absolutely great read, as it opened my eyes to a lot of different exercises to do and practice that I've never even heard of before! *David, Tennessee Colony, TX*

Henk van Oort has made it to where I want to study more. In his book *Anthroposophy*, I have found the need to understand more about the world around us. In *Theosophy* I found more about ways to train the inner "I", as well as ways to look at everything around in the environment towards advancing the evolution of the human race. In *Christianity as Mystical Fact*, Steiner shows how the mysteries that were taught to only a select few, then were brought to a stage where every person had the chance to learn them. *Robert, Bismarck, ND*

What I've gotten most I think is a deeper love of spiritually inspired poetry. I love poetry, so long as it has an in-depth concept attached to it, that is. But I especially loved the English and German poems, side-by-side in the book *Verses and Meditation*. It showed me how our words resonate with even people of other cultures. *Robert, Dickinson, TX*

The Man Without Opinions

cont. from pg 1

soon impetuously converted into his abrupt and fatal (for her) departure from his mother. Yet in between his youth and the Parzival who becomes the Grail King nearly five years later, we find the whole arc of the fulfillment of humanity's task in coming to the Earth – to love it back into conscious citizenship in, and conscious partnership with, the spiritual world. As an angry boy who quarrels with himself and God equally, through his deep longing and long-suffering determination, Parzival gradually wins the right to be taught by a true teacher and a humble man how to read the stars and witness the presence of the gods and the Christ Will in all things. In short, he learns what love wants of him, and how to work with the healing power of attention and compassion.

Certainly the illness at the center of the Parzival story is the excessive egoism of sexual desire on the part of Anfortas, defiled by self-seeking, rather than transformed into unselfish love, compassion, and creativity. Anfortas in his youth became selfishly passionate for a woman, reflected in his seemingly incurable and extremely painful wound, which resulted from his soul's failure to love unselfishly and to grow spiritually. As the Grail King he fell prey to temptation and could no longer heal himself. All the remedies that were applied and failed were aimed at the physical body. But Anfortas, like any modern materialist, though aware of his real illness, is unable to believe in the medicine that would heal him: the spiritual perception of his own soul.

One of our greatest errors, Steiner asserts, is our "assumption that we are bound to arrive at the truth when we make correct and reasonable judgments..." He says, "...a proof acquired purely through thought can never be a criterion for reality – never..." because one can prove or disprove anything. Like Parzival, we must begin our search for what is true in a mood of humility, wonder and reverence if we would attain a true feeling of being in tune with the wisdom that works in the world, which is our next step of consciousness: to be at peace with the world and the spirit that lives behind/within it.

Maybe a sign of anger working very powerfully today can be seen in the cocksureness of so many people in the expression of their opinions. We see this in some of the characters in the Parzival story who, without hesitation, express categorical judgments based upon little or no knowledge or experience. "We must judge – but we should educate ourselves to exercise caution in accepting as finally true the judgments and opinions we form.... This is a hard saying for cocksure people! They think they will never get anywhere at all if they are to doubt whether the opinion they form on some event is conclusive.... This kind of attitude must be given up [my emphasis] by anyone who does not rest content to get through life with easy self-assurance [the opposite of Parzival's life]; it must be given up if we want to set the course of our inner life in the direction of reality."

Imagine a man with no opinions. Is this not an important aspect of what Parzival finally achieves - a position "of allowing yourself to be taught by the things of the world.... An inclination to form opinions wants to be continually arriving at truth at every step; surrender, on the other hand, does not set out to force an entrance, as it were, into this or that truth, rather do we seek to educate ourselves and then quietly wait until we attain to that stage of maturity where the truth flows to us from the things of the world, coming to us in revelation and filling our whole being. To work with patience, knowing that patience will bring us further and further in wise self-education – that is the mood of surrender." As St. Paul writes to the Corinthians, "...do not come prematurely to a judgment. When the Lord comes, he will bring light into the darkness of all hidden things and reveal what the nature of the will is which rules the hearts. Then every single one will find his due acknowledgement from the divine world."

In his telling of the story, von Eschenbach makes clear that though Parzival is accepted into the Arthurian/Northern mysteries, whose path to the spirit lay in going out into the cosmos, represented by the Magi and the great astrology masters who sought to understand the macrocosm, this does not complete his task. To these mysteries he joins a Southern path to the spirit through immersion in one's own being, represented by the Shepherds and the humanity of Jesus himself. Parzival's real mission was to unite these two mystery streams, to accomplish a self-knowledge that was at the same time a cosmic wisdom, the soul in the world and the world in the soul, both finding their completion in the "thing called the Grail."

Today we can experience these two streams in the way they have become integrated into the cycle of the seasons as a result of the Mystery of Golgotha – the out-breathing of the soul from the Epiphany to St. John's Day in the spring and summer months, and the in-breathing of the soul from St. John's to Christmas. What through the spring and summer seeks the divine in the heights of the starry/spiritual world, returns to seek itself in the depths of the Earth during the fall and winter months, culminating in the newborn Child at Christmas. The wisdom found in the stars becomes the love of the free human being on and for the Earth. Every year reenacts the Arthurian and Parzival paths, the path of the Christ and the path of Michael, the path of the Magi and the path of the Shepherds, the path of thinking and the path of the will, which seek their union in love.

It may be that the Grail Parzival pursued, in one manifestation or another, has always been a part of the evolution and the development of the human soul and body, a constant thread running through time and consciousness, "...known in many imaginations, among many peoples." Interestingly, in one of the very earliest versions of the story, the first act of the Grail is to provide sustenance and comfort to one imprisoned. After the death of Christ, Joseph of Arimathea, who acquires the Grail chalice, "...is imprisoned by the high priests in a tower, which is then bricked up [solitary confinement]. Christ appears to Joseph in the darkness of his prison and brings him the Grail, which illuminated everything with a brilliant light. The sight alone of the Grail was enough to renew one's life forces." It was these Christ forces that kept Joseph alive through his long imprisonment, astonishing his captors when he was finally released. May they be there for all who seek them!

I hope this exploration of some of the underlying themes in Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* will encourage you to read the text itself. *Parzival* is one of Western literature's most shamefully neglected classics, comparable to Dante's achievement, and exceeding, in my humble opinion, that of Chaucer and Boccaccio (its close contemporaries) in range, depth and compelling wisdom.

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Illuminating Anthroposophy
Anthroposophical Prison Outreach Newsletter

Knighthood

There is a knighthood of the 21st century whose members do not ride
through the darkness of physical forests as of old,

but through the forests of darkened minds;

They are armed with a spiritual armor
and an inner sun makes them radiant;

Out of them shines healing,

healing that flows from the knowledge of mankind as a spiritual being

They must create inner order, inner justice, peace and conviction,
in the darkness of our time.

They must learn to work side by side with angels.

Karl Koenig