

THE CANONS
OF THE
FELLOWSHIP OF FRIENDS

January 1, 1986

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PREFACE:

PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLES OF THE FOURTH WAY

Remember yourself always and everywhere.

No work can be done in sleep.

Real knowledge, objective knowledge, is knowledge that comes from Higher Mind.

It is a permanent principle that one has to work beyond one's capacities to change one's level of being.

The moment you suffer, try to remember yourself.

Results are proportionate to effort.

Unreliable persons cannot get much.

We have found the weak spot in the walls of our mechanicality.

We are not what we imagine ourselves to be.

Negative emotions are not a permanent state.

There are no half-measures. You must decide: do you want to work or not?

Payment is a permanent principle.

Behind any negative emotion lies one's permission, some kind of wrong thinking.

To learn more, you have to teach.

If eternity exists, then every moment is eternal.

Functions can exist without consciousness, and consciousness can exist without functions.

Self-remembering is always right action.

Aim! Aim! More effort! More effort!

Peter D. Ouspensky

PRINCIPLES OF THE GOSPELS

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the poor in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:3-10

Pray then like this:

Our Father who art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy name,

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgive us our debts,

As we have also forgiven our debtors;

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.

Matthew 6:9-13

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES

OF

THE FELLOWSHIP OF FRIENDS

AND

THE ROLE OF THE FOUNDING MINISTER

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF FRIENDS AND THE ROLE OF THE FOUNDING MINISTER

1.1 Higher Forces

The Fellowship of Friends teaches that the universe comprises a hierarchy of worlds governed by orders of laws, that Higher Forces created the world and humanity and in various times and places select certain men to evolve both by grace and their own efforts to the level of immortal beings, and that Higher Forces establish schools on earth whereby selected men may evolve and humanity may be civilized. The Fellowship further teaches that Higher Forces have founded the Fellowship, that Conscious Beings guide and sustain this Church and its members, and intend it to serve as an ark to survive the collapse of civilization at the end of this age.

1.2. The Teaching and The Founding Minister or Teacher

The Fellowship additionally teaches that the source of the Teaching is Higher Mind, and that the Founding Minister, called the Teacher, is the authoritative Teacher of the system of ideas, the disciplines, and the counsels taught and practiced in the Fellowship, all of which constitute the Teaching and which are reflected also in the consensus of the Ministry of the Church and of the inner circle of the Fellowship. The Fellowship recognizes both the spiritual primacy of the Teacher and his mediatorship by virtue of which Higher Forces reveal their will regarding the Fellowship principally through him. He is the leader in realizing the practical aspects of the spiritual work and mission of the Fellowship. The Teacher's role is unique. The Teacher may name his deputy or his successor, or indicate the means by which his successor may be chosen. In the event that, before his passing, the Teacher shall not have named a successor or indicated the means by which a successor may be chosen, the College of Ministers shall elect his successor.

1.3 Sources of the Teaching

The Teaching of the Fellowship is principally oral and requires personal verification by each member. The Fellowship also imparts the Teaching through its publications. The principles of the ancient system of ideas taught in the Fellowship are those of the fourth way as expounded in *The Psychology of Man's Possible Evolution* by Peter

Ouspensky and in other writings by him, and also by George Gurdjieff, and Rodney Collin. The Teaching is also drawn, in part, from the writings of other eminent teachers of humanity. The Gospels are a major guide for spiritual development. Eminent artists as spiritual teachers have also illuminated the path to higher centers with or without words.

1.4 Epitome of Fellowship Teachings and Practices

The teachings and practices of the Fellowship are aimed at promoting each member's practical work on himself to become less mechanical and to begin to acquire unity, consciousness, and will, that is, to gain control of his functions and to reach his higher centers, and so to create his immortal soul. This aim is summarized in the counsel to try to remember one's self always and everywhere. To that end, the principal Fellowship discipline is to try to avoid the expression of negative emotions as the first step in the effort to transform them. In addition to the transformation of suffering, the effort to receive impressions and to transform them into higher energies is directly connected with self-remembering. As an essential part of its method of teaching and practice, the Fellowship provides, and encourages its members to seek, aesthetic and natural impressions as a source of spiritual nourishment. The Fellowship emphasizes the need for its members to be good householders, which essentially involves reliability, valuation for awakening, and the understanding that payment is a principle and that results are proportionate to efforts. The Fellowship, therefore, teaches its members how to pay and how to make right efforts. The Fellowship provides three lines of work to promote the balanced development and usefulness of its members, that is, members are taught, first, methods of self-study, the cultivation of right attitudes, and to divide attention; second, to work with and for others; and third, to work for the Fellowship. Furthermore, the Fellowship teaches that balanced development requires work on both knowledge and being. Finally, the Fellowship teaches its members to try to govern their relations with one another according to the principle of external consideration, for consciousness embraces love.

1.5 The Method of the Fourth Way in the Fellowship

The teachings of the fourth way can have little practical result unless they are applied under the guidance of a teacher, whose principle qualification is his ability to remember himself. The teacher demonstrates to his students how to apply the ideas of the fourth way

to the mechanical patterns of personal behavior that prevent the manifestation of higher states of consciousness. The teacher, as a conscious being, is able to mediate between higher levels of being and his students to help to create within the students the higher states of consciousness that they seek. The teacher does this in part by direct counselling and in part by creating in the school conditions and influences that promote the development of consciousness. The students need to master the methods of their teacher, for, as George I. Gurdjieff said, "Every teacher is a specialist in some one thing. One is an astronomer, another a sculptor, a third a musician, and all the pupils of each teacher must first of all study the subject in which he [the teacher] has specialized." (In Search of the Miraculous, page 15) It is through his specialty that a teacher creates the conditions and influences that promote the development of consciousness.

In addition, the teacher trusts Higher Forces to reveal to him the direction that his specialty must take. For, as George I. Gurdjieff said, "The fourth way is never without some work of a definite significance, is never without some undertaking around which and in connection with which it can alone exist. Schools of the fourth way exist for the needs of the work that is being carried out in connection with the proposed undertaking." (Ibid.) It is this undertaking through which the teacher, using his specialty, creates conscious conditions and influences and through which the school performs its larger task. In this undertaking, the whole school participates.

The choice of the task depends upon what Higher Forces reveal to the teacher about the needs of the age in which the school exists. A real fourth way school, therefore, is not imitative of the methods and tasks of other religious or philosophical organizations, or even of other fourth way schools. Higher Forces have revealed that the collapse of civilization is imminent, and that a dark age will ensue. The Fellowship of Friends has been given the task of preserving higher culture as expressed in the fine and performing arts and in the cultivation of refined social standards. Hence, forms of religion, the visual arts, music, the humanities, architecture and other expressions of spiritual, cultural and social achievement occupy an essential place in the methods and practices of the Fellowship, alongside, but not superior to, the place occupied by the principles of the fourth way. These forms not only provide methods of personal spiritual development as created by the Teacher, but also comply with the designs of Higher Forces regarding the task of the Fellowship.

In the struggle to raise one's level of consciousness, the Fellowship recognizes the traditional relationship between the love of Higher Forces and the love of the arts. As Abbot Suger of St. Denis said, "Man may rise to the contemplation of the divine through the senses."

The Fellowship teaches that among mankind's outstanding works of art, whether they are conventionally considered religious or secular, works with profound spiritual content have been created, and that active, appreciative exposure to such impressions helps the student to awaken his higher centers by educating and strengthening the parts of his being that are closest to the divine nature. In the Fellowship, the use of the arts is an exercise in the development of emotional sensitivity and directed attention, by which the student approaches Beauty, which along with Goodness and Truth forms the trinity of divine ideals as taught by Plato. In the words of the Teacher, "Beauty creates its likeness in those who pursue it."

1.6 The Fellowship's World Wide Mission

The Fellowship recognizes its mission to attempt to reach as many as can hear the Teaching and enter the Way. For this purpose, the Fellowship establishes centers wherever possible in the major cities of the world. Fellowship members are encouraged to participate in this work by removing to distant centers to make the Teaching available to those who sincerely seek it and are prepared to apply it practically.

1.7 Renaissance

Renaissance is the principal seat of the Fellowship and, as its heart and the focus of its energy and work, serves all of its members.

1.8 Institution of the Church Ministry

To sustain the work initiated by the Teacher, certain members are called to the Fellowship Ministry. In addition to the commissioned Ministers, center directors are appointed to participate in the Ministry by teaching in and administering one of the Fellowship centers.

1.9 Necessity of Travel

The visitation of centers, especially by the Teacher, as well as by the Ministers and other members, is essential to the spiritual welfare of the members. The circulation of members throughout the Fellowship ensures its well-being by fostering mutual understanding, cooperation, and cultural growth among the members. Such circulation of members also provides additional opportunities for work and acquaints members with various aspects of the Fellowship. In addition, the journeys of the Teacher are necessary for him to fulfill his task of determining the opportune times and places to establish, or to disestablish, Fellowship centers. His task also includes searching throughout the world for the aspects of culture that both provide aesthetic impressions for the spiritual nourishment of Fellowship members and also may be placed in the ark as seminal forms to flourish again in future civilizations.

1.10 Recognition of Ministerial Jurisdiction

The Board of Directors of the Fellowship, by a resolution of May 22, 1977, instituted the Ministerial Committee, henceforth called the Fellowship Council. According to both the By-Laws of the Fellowship and these Canons, the Teacher, and the College of Ministers and the Fellowship Council, in conjunction with the Teacher, shall have jurisdiction over all ministerial and spiritual affairs of the Church.

1.11 Autonomy of the Ministry's Spiritual Jurisdiction

Whereas the teaching and definition of Church doctrine are inherent in the Ministry of the church, consequently, no action or resolution of the Board of Directors shall be construed as authoritative teaching or definition of Church doctrine, or shall be construed to empower the Board of Directors to exercise jurisdiction over the ministerial and spiritual affairs of the Church, except in such administrative, fiscal and disciplinary matters as specified by the laws of the State of California, or any other appropriate civil jurisdiction, and by the By-Laws and Canons of the Fellowship.

1.12 Authority and Scope of the Canons

This document, The Canons of the Fellowship of Friends, is approved for use in the Church henceforth and said document shall supersede any previous provisions in the By-Laws of the Church, any previous actions or resolutions of the Board of Directors, or any previous policy or transactions of the Fellowship Council that may be at variance with the contents of these Canons.

1.13 Amendment of the Canons

These canons, insofar as they are based upon Church teaching and practice, shall have the force of By-Laws of the Church; they may be amended by a majority vote of both the members of the Board of Directors present at a duly constituted meeting thereof, and the members of the Fellowship Council present at a duly constituted meeting thereof, in conjunction with the Teacher.

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets."

Matthew 22:36-40

CHAPTER II

MEMBERSHIP, RENAISSANCE AND FELLOWSHIP CENTERS

OPPORTUNITY

I think we have come to a crossroads on many different scales. Some tremendous opportunity is preparing. But an opportunity is also a test, and the greater the opportunity the more drastic the sifting. Perhaps all our work is but preparation, so that as many as possible shall take advantage of that opportunity when it comes. The work now is the projection of harmony, on every scale, beginning with the achievement of harmony within oneself. The more harmony can be realised and understood, the more fully will this new opportunity be taken, and the more some parallel disaster will be diminished.

Rodney Collin, The Theory of Conscious Harmony
October 3, 1955

Many people are waiting, expecting. They feel themselves on the edge of a new era, and they feel that quite new things are expected of them. But they don't know what. The weak ones lose themselves in imagination, fantasy and dreams, hoping that they will be carried into the new order floating on the tide, the strong ones work alone as best they can, and hope. They are waiting for this word of harmony. And they recognise it immediately.

Rodney Collin, The Theory of Conscious Harmony
February 7, 1955

II. MEMBERSHIP, RENAISSANCE AND FELLOWSHIP CENTERS

2.1 Membership

2.1.1 Qualifications of Membership

A person who petitions for membership in the Fellowship must do so through an established center, or, in extraordinary circumstances, through the Teacher or the Fellowship Council. Before a person may be admitted to membership, the center director of the center in which he petitions for membership, the Teacher, or the Fellowship Council, as the case may be, must be satisfied that the person meets the qualifications for membership stipulated in the Canons and the By-Laws, that he has received appropriate instruction concerning the teaching and practices of the church, and that he exhibit the capacity and willingness to apply the teachings and practices of the Fellowship in practical work on himself, with other members, and for the Fellowship.

2.1.2. Dismissal and Reinstatement of Members

The disciplining or the dismissal of members from the Fellowship shall be according to custom as established by the teachings and practices of the Fellowship. Members whose actions are at variance with the teachings and practices of the Fellowship to the extent that they compromise the welfare and aims of the Fellowship and who persist incorrigibly in such behavior may be dismissed by the Teacher or by the majority of a quorum of the Fellowship Council at a duly organized meeting of the same in consultation with the Teacher. Reinstatement to membership of any dismissed members may be permitted if such persons meet the conditions for reinstatement as determined by the Teacher or by the majority of a quorum of the Fellowship Council in consultation with the Teacher. Such actions of dismissal and reinstatement may be formally pronounced and promulgated accordingly as the Teacher or the Fellowship Council in consultation with the Teacher deem such action appropriate.

2.2. Renaissance and the Aims of the Fellowship

Renaissance is our mutual home, the main energy accumulator of the Fellowship, and the foundation of the ark. Members are encouraged to visit and, to the extent feasible, to reside for a time at Renaissance where the influence of Higher Forces and the Teacher is most strongly expressed to help members to awaken, where opportunities for the three lines of work abound, and where members can find the greatest concentration in the Fellowship of Ministers and elder members to guide and to encourage them in their work. Moreover, members from other centers bring to Renaissance a variety of spiritual, cultural and other experiences that the Fellowship requires both for the progress of the whole and the work of individual members. Renaissance remains the chief place where Fellowship members from all centers in the world can gather to work and to be together.

2.3. Fellowship Centers as Organizational Units

The Fellowship centers constitute the organizational units of the Fellowship. As such, they are the principal means by which members are provided with information about the teachings and practices of the Fellowship and with opportunities to participate practically in three lines of work. Members in the centers make the Teaching available to prospective members chiefly through advertisement and then by introducing the system in a series of meetings to those who inquire. Qualified prospective members are then offered the opportunity of becoming members of the Fellowship and participating in the Work as a member of a given center.

2.4 Participation of Fellowship Members in Centers

Outside of Renaissance, centers provide the focus of Fellowship work and activity. Members are advised to participate as much as possible in center activities. Newer members enhance their understanding of the Teaching and their own practical work to the extent that they participate in center activities and try to learn from the elder members. Center members benefit themselves by investigating and using the facilities in the city and region that provide them with outstanding aesthetic and natural impressions and other constructive experiences for their spiritual nourishment, cultural growth, and recreation. By guiding other

members to the sources that they have found, such members can help them to profit from such experiences.

TELL ALL NATIONS!

O sing to the Lord a new song;
Sing to the Lord, all the earth!
Sing to the Lord, bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day.
Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples!
For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised;
he is to be feared above all gods.
For all the gods of the peoples are idols;
but the Lord made the heavens.
Honor and majesty are before him;
Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts!
Worship the Lord in holy array;
tremble before him all the earth!

Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns!
yea, the world is established,
it shall never be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity."
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar and all that fills it;
let the field exult, and everything in it!
Then shall all the trees of the wood
sing for joy before the Lord, for he comes,
for he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with his truth.

Psalm 96

CHAPTER III

THE FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY

THE PATH OF WISDOM

To revere the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. My son, if you come forward to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for testing. Set your heart right and be steadfast, and do not be hasty in time of calamity. Cleave to Him and do not depart that you may be honored at the end of your life. Accept whatever is brought upon you, and in changes that humble you be patient, for gold is tested in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation. My son, from your youth onward choose instruction, and until you are old, you will keep finding wisdom. Come to her like one who plows and sows, and wait for her good harvest. For in her service you will toil a little while, and soon you will eat of her produce. She seems very harsh to the uninitiated; a weakling will not remain with her. If you are willing my son, you will be taught, and if you apply yourself you will learn wisdom.

Ecclesiasticus 1:14; 2:1-5; 6:1-20, 32

III. THE FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY

3.1. The Ministerial Office

3.1.1. Ideal of Service

Members called to the Fellowship Ministry share in the ministerial and teaching office of the Teacher. Ministers can be aided in establishing a right attitude toward their responsibilities to the extent that they understand that minister essentially means servant. The exercise of leadership in the Fellowship is that of leadership in service.

"Whoever would be great among you must first be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be the slave of all."

Mark 10:43-44

3.1.2. Basic Responsibilities of Ministers; Confidentiality

In conjunction with the Teacher, Ministers are chiefly responsible in the Fellowship at large for teaching and counselling their fellow members regarding the system of ideas, the disciplines, and the counsels taught and practiced in the Fellowship, and are also responsible for maintaining the integrity of the Teaching and ensuring that counselling remains consistent with the teachings and practices of the Fellowship. As an authorized and regular spiritual counselor, a Minister is required to keep confidential any such communications that a Fellowship member may make to the Minister in confidence with no other person present. Such confidentiality is maintained if the Minister finds it necessary to inquire of the Teacher or another Minister about the principles of the Teaching that apply to the situation about which such member has sought counselling. Ministers are responsible otherwise for ministering to the needs of members by performing other forms of spiritual service that may be needed. Ministers may also be asked by the Teacher or the Fellowship Council to perform such other duties as the Fellowship may require.

3.1.3. Qualifications of the Ministry

The ordinary qualifications and requirements for the Ministry include a long-term demonstration of commitment to the three lines of work, sufficient knowledge and understanding of the Teaching and ability to apply it, and the capacity to teach and to counsel effectively. In addition, the life circumstances of a Minister must allow him to exercise his role effectively. To the extent possible, candidates for the Ministry should have spent time at Renaissance working and receiving instruction from the Ministers who reside and frequently visit there.

3.1.4. Scope of the Ministerial Commission

The commission of a person as a Minister of the Fellowship is ordinarily for life unless the needs of the Church indicate otherwise. In the event of the nullification or resignation of a person's commission as a Minister of the Fellowship, he shall cease immediately to exercise such role. The Fellowship Ministry is intended for ministration only to Fellowship members and, in instances specified in the Fellowship Ministry Manual, to their immediate families.

3.1.5. Fullness and Collegiality of the Ministry

The Fellowship Ministry is collegial both in teaching and the confirmation of ministerial commissions; all ministers participate in the fullness of the Ministry, and the exercise of their Ministry is at large in the Church. The Ministers constitute collectively the College of Ministers of the Fellowship. The jurisdiction over the ministerial and spiritual affairs of the Fellowship is permanently the province of the Teacher, and the College of Ministers and the Fellowship Council in conjunction with him. The authority to commission Ministers is permanently the province of the Teacher; the College of Ministers participates in the commissioning process by confirming Ministerial commissions. The Ministers, along with the officers and directors sitting on the Board of Directors, and the Councilors sitting on the Fellowship Council, constitute the voting members, or electors, of the Fellowship, whose responsibilities as such are stipulated in the By-Laws of the Fellowship. The College of Ministers constitutes the principal advisory body to the Teacher, the Fellowship Council, and the Board of Directors.

3.1.6. Center Directors as Sharers in the Ministry

Center directors share in the Fellowship Ministry to the extent that they are responsible for teaching and otherwise performing ministerial duties in the centers to which they have been appointed during their term of directorship, during which time the Fellowship qualified them as ministers according to the legal definition thereof in the State of California, or in the state within which such center director performs ministerial duties or in any nation wherein such qualification is valid and feasible, although they may, or may not, be given the title of Minister. Center directors who are also Ministers, of course, participate in the fullness of the Ministry.

THE SPIRITUAL TEACHER

My covenant with him was a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him, that he might be reverent; and he revered me, he stood in awe of my name. True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many away from iniquity. For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.

Malachi 2:5-7

3.2. The Selection and Commissioning of Ministers
and Their Responsibilities

3.2.1. Commissioning of Ministers

Ministers shall be commissioned on the basis of merit and the needs of the Church. Commissioning of Ministers shall be made by the Teacher with, or without, the prior nomination of a given Ministerial candidate by the Fellowship Council or the College of Ministers. The Secretary of the Fellowship Council shall record the commission in the transactions of the Fellowship Council and shall announce it to the Board of Directors and the recipient of such commission. The confirmation of a Ministerial commission by the College of Ministers shall be presumed; only the failure of the College of Ministers to confirm a given Ministerial commission shall nullify such commission. In such instance, the College of Ministers would be required to show cause for not confirming the commission and so inform the Teacher and the Fellowship Council.

3.2.2. Review, Nullification and Reinstatement of
Ministerial Commissions

Commissioning of Ministers shall be also subject to review by the Board of Directors, which shall, by a vote of two-thirds of its members present at a duly constituted meeting thereof, be empowered to initiate the procedure of nullifying the commission of a Minister of the Fellowship by showing cause for such nullification. In such case, the Secretary of the Board of Directors shall notify the Teacher and the Fellowship Council of the action taken. Such commission shall be nullified unless, within forty (40) days of receipt of such notice, the Fellowship Council by a vote of two-thirds of its members present at a duly constituted meeting thereof in conjunction with the Teacher shall uphold such commission of a Minister of the Fellowship. The commission of a Minister of the Church may be nullified by the Teacher or by a vote of a majority of the members of the Fellowship Council present at a duly organized meeting thereof in consultation with the Teacher. Except in cases wherein charges of malfeasance, misfeasance or nonfeasance are brought and substantiated against a Minister in the Church Court, nullification of the commission of a Minister of the Church shall be based either upon the needs of the Church, or the inculpable incapacity of such Minister, or

both. Ministerial commissions may be reinstated by the regular commissioning procedure at any time that the needs of the Church so require. The Secretary of the Fellowship Council shall record such nullification of a commission of a Minister of the Fellowship in the transactions of the Fellowship Council, and shall announce it to the Board of Directors and to the person who has held such commission.

3.2.3. Charges of Malfeasance, Misfeasance or Nonfeasance

In the event that any charges of malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance may be brought against any Minister of the Church, such charges shall be reviewed, investigated, and resolved by the Church Court according to the provisions in the By-Laws of the Church regarding such charges. After such charges have been brought and substantiated in the Church Court, the person's ministerial commission may be nullified according to the procedures indicated in Canon 3.2.2.

3.2.4. Resignation of Ministerial Commissions

A Minister of the Fellowship may resign his commission by so notifying the Teacher or the Fellowship Council. The Secretary of the Fellowship Council shall record any such resignation in the transactions of the Fellowship Council and announce it to the Board of Directors.

3.2.5. Conditions of Automatic Nullification of Commissions

The commission of a person as a Minister of the Fellowship is automatically and immediately nullified either by his withdrawal or dismissal from membership in the Fellowship.

3.2.6. Administration of Ceremonies and Authority and Responsibilities Regarding Marriage Contracts

Ministers of the Church are responsible for administering Fellowship ceremonies upon the request of Fellowship members in the centers in which they reside or visit. The ceremonies indicated in the Fellowship Ministry Manual for optional use in the Fellowship, mark the major milestones in the lives of Fellowship members and their families and constitute a traditional religious form for the Fellowship's Community of

Families. Ministers of the Church are authorized to solemnize the marriages of Fellowship members both according to the legal provisions regarding marriage contracts in the state or nation wherein the marriage is to be solemnized and also the standards established by the Teacher and Fellowship Council in consultation with the Teacher. The Minister shall inform the Fellowship Council of the names of the persons whose marriage he has solemnized, the place and date of the marriage, and the names of the two principal witnesses. In instances wherein a Minister of the Fellowship is not also legally empowered to witness a valid marriage contract, such Minister shall inform the couple intending to marry of the necessity of arranging a valid contract with the civil authorities. This subject is discussed in full in the chapter on Marriage in the Fellowship Ministry Manual.

3.2.7. Ministerial Compensation and Employment

Ministers of the Fellowship may receive compensation from the Fellowship for the performance of ministerial duties. The amount of a Minister's salary is fixed by a resolution of the Board of Directors upon the advice of the Teacher or the Fellowship Council in consultation with the Teacher. A Minister is solely responsible for meeting the tax requirements pertaining to his ministerial income. Employment outside of the Fellowship may be necessary, of course, for Ministers who do not receive compensation from the Fellowship to support themselves adequately.

3.2.8. Limitations Regarding Fees and Gifts

Ministers may not solicit fees or gifts from members for performing ceremonies or any other duties. Ministers may, however, accept modest gifts from members for performing ceremonies and on other occasions as long as such gifts are freely offered and are in keeping with the scale of the service rendered.

THE IDEALS OF VIRTUOUS SERVICE
AS TAUGHT IN THE TAO TE CHING OF LAO TSE

The sage has no mind of his own.
He is aware of the needs of others.

I am good to people who are good.
I am also good to people who are not good,
because virtue is goodness.
I have faith in people who are faithful.
I also have faith in people who are not faithful,
because virtue is faithfulness.

The sage is shy and humble—to the world he seems
confusing.
Men look to him and listen.
He behaves like a little child.

Number 49

In caring for others and serving heaven,
There is nothing like using restraint.
Restraint begins with giving up one's own ideas.
This depends on virtue gathered in the past.
If there is a good store of virtue, then nothing is
impossible.
If nothing is impossible, then there are no limits.
If a man knows no limits, then he is fit to be a ruler.
The mother principle of learning holds good for a long
time.
This is called having deep roots and a firm foundation,
The Tao of long life and eternal wisdom.

Number 59

Practice non-action.
Work without doing.
Taste the tasteless.
Magnify the small; increase the few.
Reward bitterness with care.

See simplicity in the complicated.
Achieve greatness in little things.

In the universe the difficult things are done as if
they are easy.
In the universe great acts are made up of small deeds.
The sage does not attempt anything very big, and thus
achieves greatness.

Easy promises make for little trust.
Taking things lightly results in great difficulty.

Because the sage always confronts difficulties,
he never experiences them.

Number 63

Why is the sea king of a hundred streams?
Because it lies below them,
Therefore it is the king of a hundred streams.

If the sage would guide the people,
he must serve with humility.
If he would lead them, he must follow behind.
In this way when the sage rules,
the people will not feel oppressed;
When he stands before them, they will not be harmed.
The whole world will support him
and will not tire of him.

Because he does not compete,
he does not meet competition.

Number 66

A man is born gentle and weak.
At his death he is hard and stiff.
Green plants are tender and filled with sap.
At their death they are withered and dry.

Therefore the stiff and unbending is
the disciple of death.
The gentle and the yielding is the disciple of life.

Thus an army without flexibility never wins a battle.
A tree that is unbending is easily broken.

The hard and strong will fall.
The soft and weak will overcome.

Number 76

3.3. The Selection and Appointment of Center Directors and Their Responsibilities

3.3.1 Appointment of Center Directors

Center directors shall be appointed on the basis of merit and the needs of the Church. Appointment of center directors shall be made by the Teacher or by a majority vote of a quorum of the Fellowship Council at a duly organized meeting thereof, in consultation with the Teacher. The Secretary of the Fellowship Council shall record the appointment of a center director in the transactions of the Fellowship Council and shall announce it to the Board of Directors and the recipient of such appointment.

3.3.2 Assignment of Responsibilities in a Designated Center

Center directors shall be appointed to a designated center and may be transferred to direct another center by the same procedure indicated above regarding appointments of center directors. Likewise, the termination of an appointment of a center director shall be made by the Teacher or by a majority vote of a quorum of the Fellowship Council at a duly organized meeting thereof in consultation with the Teacher. The Secretary of the Fellowship Council shall record such termination of appointment in the transactions of the Fellowship Council and announce it to the Board of Directors and the person whose appointment has been terminated. No fixed term of service for center directors is stipulated; center directors, however, are ordinarily replaced after serving some number of years in that capacity or at any time that the needs of the Church so require. A person whose appointment as center director has been terminated may at any subsequent time be reappointed center director in any center as the needs of the Fellowship may require. Except in cases wherein charges of malfeasance, misfeasance or nonfeasance are brought and substantiated in the Church Court, termination of the appointment of a center director shall be based upon either the needs of the Fellowship or the inculpable incapacity of such center director, or both.

3.3.3. Charges of Malfeasance, Misfeasance, or Nonfeasance

In the event that any charges of malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance may be brought against any center director, such charges shall be reviewed, investigated, and resolved according to the provisions in the By-Laws regarding such charges. After such charges have been brought and substantiated in the Church Court, the person's appointment as center director may be terminated according to the procedures indicated in Canon 3.3.2.

3.3.4. Resignation of Appointment

A center director may resign his appointment by so notifying the Teacher or the Fellowship Council. The Secretary of the Fellowship Council shall record any such resignation in the transactions of the Fellowship Council and announce it to the Board of Directors.

3.3.5. Conditions of Automatic Nullification of Appointment

The appointment of a person as a center director is automatically and immediately nullified either by his withdrawal or dismissal from membership in the Fellowship.

3.3.6. Provisions Applicable to Ministers and Center Directors

Canons 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3, and 3.1.4 apply also to center directors; Canon 3.1.6 further specifies the role of center directors. Likewise, Canons 3.2.6, 3.2.7, 3.2.8, and 3.2.9 apply to center directors, except that they may administer Fellowship ceremonies only in the center to which they have been appointed unless the Teacher or the Fellowship Council authorizes them in a specific instance to administer a ceremony in another center. Center directors, therefore, may solemnize the marriages of Fellowship members only in the centers of which they are the director; at least one person of the couple intending to marry shall be a member of such center. Center directors shall provide the Fellowship Council with the information called for in Canon 3.2.6 and adhere to all the other requirements indicated therein.

3.3.7. Basic Responsibilities of Center Directors

Center directorships are ordinarily collegial: customarily, a man and a woman are designated to serve as co-directors of a center. Center directors may delegate administrative responsibilities to other capable members and are encouraged to provide opportunities for members to work for others and the Fellowship. Center directors, however, remain basically responsible for the prudent administration of the center. Center directors are also responsible for cooperating with the Teacher and the Fellowship Council and other members charged with specific responsibilities by the same, such as visiting teachers and regional coordinators. Directors of a center should approach their common task in the spirit of cooperation and service to the members and the Fellowship. Center directors are chiefly responsible for leading center meetings, and, to the extent necessary, directing other center functions intended to promote the members' learning, working and being together. And, since, to learn more, one must teach, center directors need to encourage other members also to teach.

3.3.8 Teaching and Meetings

Any of a variety of approaches to the system is valid as long as the teachings and practices of the Fellowship are discussed in a responsible and respectful manner; the behavior of members at Fellowship functions should be governed by the teaching and practices of the Fellowship. One who is to lead a meeting is advised, to the extent possible, to spend some time beforehand in reflection and study and otherwise to make suitable preparation. It is also best to avoid counselling or discussing personal or center difficulties with other members before a meeting since it is right action for one about to lead a meeting to reserve his primary energy and attention for the meeting.

3.3.9. Introduction of Prospective Members to the Teaching and Their Admission to Membership

The center directors and the other elder, supporting members in the center are responsible for advertising the Fellowship in their city or region and for presenting the basic knowledge of the system in a series of three meetings to prospective members who sincerely seek it. The center directors may then admit to

membership such persons whom they determine are appropriately prepared. The requirements for membership are stipulated in Canon 2.1.1.

3.3.10 Resolution of Difficulties in the Center

Matters of discipline or other difficulties that cannot be resolved by center directors should be referred to visiting teachers, or a regional coordinator, or, if necessary, the Fellowship Council, or the Teacher. To avoid augmenting difficulties, center directors are advised to be discrete about discussing such matters with members in the center.

FRATERNAL HARMONY

Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell in unity!
It is like the precious oil upon the head,
running down upon the beard,
upon the head of Aaron,
running down on the collar of his robes!
It is like the dew from above,
which falls on the sacred mountain.
For there the Lord has commanded the blessing,
life for evermore.

Psalm 133

3.4 Regional Coordinators

The Teacher or the Fellowship Council, in conjunction with the Teacher, may appoint center directors or other qualified members to serve as regional coordinators for several centers in a designated region; such appointments may be for a specific purpose or for the general coordination of the work of the Fellowship in the centers in the region. In times when visiting teachers cannot be sent regularly, regional coordinators may help the centers in the region by personally visiting such centers, or by arranging for other directors or elder members in the region to visit centers, or both. A regional coordinator, however, shall not fulfill the role assigned to center directors except in the center of which he has been appointed director.

3.5 Visiting Teachers

3.5.1 Role of Visiting Teachers

From time to time, centers receive visiting teachers, whose responsibilities include teaching and counselling the members, encouraging them in their practical work and efforts to awaken, and, as a more disinterested party, suggesting ways of resolving difficulties that the center directors, or others in the center, may need help in understanding. Any Minister or center director may be assigned to visit centers in this capacity. Any other member may also be so assigned whenever the Teacher or the Fellowship Council in consultation with the Teacher determines that the members may benefit from such a person's experience in the Fellowship and his capacity for teaching and counselling.

3.5.2. Assignment of Visiting Teachers

The Fellowship Council ordinarily shall designate one or more of its members as coordinators to collaborate with the Teacher in assigning visiting teachers to designated centers. The coordinators shall inform the visiting teacher of his duties and the financial and other policies pertaining to him, as determined by the Teacher, the Fellowship Council and the Board of Directors. The coordinators shall also receive reports from the visiting teachers regarding the welfare of the centers and any other information useful to the Fellowship in connection with their visits and shall report such information to the Teacher, the

Fellowship Council, and the Board of Directors as may be appropriate.

ON THE RULING FACULTY AND PLAYING ONE'S ROLE

The subject of the good and the wise man is his own ruling faculty as the body is the subject for the physician and the trainer, and the soil is the subject for the farmer. And the work of the good and wise man is to use appearances according to nature. For it is the nature of every soul to consent to what is good and to reject what is evil and to hold back from what is uncertain.

Remember that you are an actor in a play, of such a part as it may please the director to assign you; of a short part if he chooses a short part, of a long one if he chooses a long one. And if he will have you take the part of a poor man, or a cripple, or a governor, or a private person, may you act that part well! For it is yours to act the allotted part well, but to choose it belongs to another.

Epictetus, The Enchiridion
I. 4, II. 20

THE NEED FOR WATCHFULNESS

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Take heed, watch; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his own work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Watch therefore—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning—so that he does not come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you, I say to all: watch.

Mark 13:31-7

CHAPTER IV
THE COLLEGE OF MINISTERS
AND
THE FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL

APOSTOLIC COUNSELS

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be uninformed. There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For the body does not consist of one member, but of many. If all were a single organ, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you still a more excellent way.

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. When I was a child I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; but when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Lo! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, a twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall all be changed. For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

Death is swallowed up in victory.
O death, where is thy sting?
O grave, where is thy victory?

I Corinthians 12:1, 4-7, 14, 19-20,
26, 31; 13:1-13; 15: 51-55

IV. THE COLLEGE OF MINISTERS AND THE FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL

4.1 General Jurisdiction

The Teacher, and the College of Ministers and the Fellowship Council in conjunction with the Teacher, shall have jurisdiction over the ministerial and spiritual affairs of the Church.

4.2 The College of Ministers

4.2.1. Membership, Meetings, and Jurisdiction

Fellowship Ministers are ex officio members of the College of Ministers and voting members of the Fellowship. The College shall meet from time to time and at such place as its members shall consider it appropriate, but at least once annually in conjunction with the annual meeting of the voting members of the Fellowship, as indicated in the Fellowship By-Laws. Meeting in separate session, the College shall:

Vote upon the confirmation of any Ministerial commissions granted by the Teacher during the time since the College last voted upon ministerial commissions.

In conjunction with the Teacher, elect the officers of the College for an annual term, who shall also serve in the same capacities as officers of the Fellowship Council, and also elect the other Councilors of the Fellowship Council.

In conjunction with the Teacher, or his representative, consider such ministerial and spiritual affairs of the Fellowship that the College may deem appropriate; offer such counsel as the College may deem appropriate to the Teacher, the Fellowship Council, and the Board of Directors.

4.2.2 Officers

The officers of the College shall consist of the Dean and the Secretary. The Dean shall be the presiding officer in meetings of the College; in his absence or incapacity, the Acting Dean shall preside. The Secretary shall record the transactions of the College. Officers shall be elected from the Roll of Ministers.

4.2.3 Meeting Procedures

A standard format for meetings of the College may be adopted by majority vote of a quorum of members present in a duly organized meeting of the College. Such format shall be subject to modification by a majority vote of a quorum of members present in a duly organized meeting of the College. In the absence of any resolution by the College regarding rules governing meetings, meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Revised. All rules of procedure shall be subject to the provisions of the Fellowship's Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws and to the Laws of the State of California. A quorum for meetings shall be a majority of Fellowship Ministers. Ministers may assign their proxy with, or without, voting instructions to another minister in attendance at a given meeting and thereby be counted as present at such meeting when the Roll of Ministers is called to determine if a quorum is present.

4.3 The Fellowship Council

4.3.1 Qualification and Election of Councilors

The members of the Fellowship Council shall be called Councilors. They shall be ex officio voting members of the Fellowship. Councilors shall be elected for an annual term. Such election shall be based on merit as judged and approved by the Teacher and a majority of a quorum of members of the College of Ministers present at a duly constituted meeting of the College. The membership of the Council, including the officers, shall number at least five (5). The Teacher or the College of Ministers in conjunction with the Teacher may fix a maximum number of Councilors. The majority of Councilors shall be Ministers. Vacancies on the Council, including either of the officer's positions, shall be filled within ninety (90) days from the date

of the occurrence. In conjunction with the Teacher, the majority of a quorum of Council members present in a duly constituted meeting of the Council, shall be empowered to elect a Councilor or officer to fill such vacancy until the date of the next regular elections.

4.3.2 Officers

The officers of the Fellowship Council shall consist of a Dean and a Secretary and be elected for an annual term from the Roll of Ministers by the College of Ministers at its annual meeting. The Dean and Secretary of the Council shall be the same as those respective officers of the college and be qualified as other councilors to hold office on the Council.

4.3.3 The Responsibilities of the Dean of the Fellowship Council

The responsibilities of the Dean shall include:

To preside over all meetings of the College of Ministers and the Fellowship Council

To represent the College of Ministers and the Fellowship Council, or to designate another member thereof to do so, on all appropriate occasions

To bring before the College of Ministers and the Fellowship Council such matters that are their concern and otherwise to provide leadership in the carrying out of the responsibilities of said bodies

To appoint a member of the Fellowship Council to serve as Acting Secretary in the event of the temporary absence or incapacity of the Secretary

To perform any other duties as may from time to time be delegated to him by the Teacher, the College of Ministers, or the Fellowship Council.

4.3.4 Responsibilities of the Secretary of the Fellowship Council

The responsibilities of the Secretary shall include:

To maintain accurate records of all transactions of the Ministerial Council; to communicate transactions of the College of Ministers and the Fellowship Council to the Board of Directors and to any Fellowship members to whom such transactions apply

To maintain a roll of the College of Ministers and of center directors, and also a registry of marriages solemnized by Ministers of the Church and center directors, and of other ceremonies performed, as the Ministerial Council may designate

In consultation with the Dean, to inform Fellowship Council members of the time and place of special meetings in a timely manner, to prepare meeting agendas, and otherwise to expedite the business of the Fellowship Council

To serve as Acting Dean in the event of the Dean's temporary absence or incapacity

To perform any other duties as may from time to time be delegated to him by the College of Ministers, the Fellowship Council, or the Dean.

4.3.5 Consultants

The Fellowship Council, by a majority vote of a quorum present at a duly organized meeting thereof, may appoint any Fellowship member to be a consultant to the Council in any area in which it has a proper concern. Consultants, however, shall not vote, or in other ways participate as members in the Council.

4.3.6 Meetings

Meetings of the Fellowship Council shall be held at such time and place as determined by a majority of the quorum present before the close of the previous duly organized meeting of the Council, but no less than four times annually at regular quarterly intervals. Whenever the welfare of the Fellowship so requires,

the Dean, or the Acting Dean, in case of the Dean's absence or incapacity, may duly call special meetings of the Council, provided that each member thereof is informed in a timely manner of the time and place of such a meeting.

4.3.7 Meeting Procedures

A standard format for Fellowship Council meetings may be adopted by a majority vote of the members of the Council. Such format shall be subject to modification by a majority vote of a quorum of members present at a duly organized meeting of the Council. In the absence of any resolution by the Council regarding rules governing meetings, meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Revised. All rules of procedure shall be subject to the provisions of the Fellowship's Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws and to the laws of the State of California. A quorum for meetings shall be a majority of the members of the Council.

4.3.8 Administrative Committee and Council Organization

The Dean and the Secretary and any such other Councilors as the Council may designate shall constitute the Administrative Committee of the Council and be authorized to carry on such Council business as the Council may deem appropriate. The Council may also constitute such other committees from its members as it deems appropriate. The Administrative Committee, in the person of the Dean or any other member in the Dean's absence, shall, in consultation with the Teacher, be empowered to act appropriately in situations that concern the spiritual welfare of the Fellowship or any of its members and that require immediate attention. Such actions shall be reported to the Council at the next duly organized meeting thereof; such actions shall be invalid if undertaken to circumvent the ordinary jurisdiction of the Teacher, or the Council, or both.

4.4 Specific Jurisdiction of the Fellowship Council

The Fellowship Council, in conjunction with the Teacher and the College of Ministers, shall have jurisdiction over the following ministerial and spiritual affairs of the Fellowship, and any others that the Council, the Teacher and the College of Ministers may deem appropriate, according to the teachings and practices of the Church:

4.4.1 Ministers and Center Directors

In conjunction with the Teacher, to train select, instruct, examine, and nominate candidates for the Ministry and center directorships; and to appoint center directors, and exercise jurisdiction over and counsel them in the assignment and performance of their responsibilities as indicated in the Canons of Chapter III.

4.4.2 Fellowship Ministry Manual

To prepare and to issue The Fellowship Ministry Manual to all Ministers of the Church and to each center, and to advise Ministers and center directors concerning the administration of Fellowship ceremonies intended to mark the principal milestones in the lives of members and their families as indicated in Canon 3.2.6.

4.4.3 Center Support

To support Fellowship centers in their aims as indicated in Canons 2.3, and 2.4, which support shall include the enlistment of members to reside in centers that require the support of additional, elder members; this responsibility shall also include participating with the Teacher in the study of cities and regions where new centers might be established or where circumstances warrant the disestablishment of centers; additionally, to guide center directors concerning appropriate and effective means of advertising and presenting the Teaching to prospective members; and to coordinate the visits of travelling teachers to centers.

4.4.4 Information and Publications

To serve as a clearinghouse and distributor of information necessary or beneficial to Fellowship members; to cooperate with the Teacher in the issuing of the publications distributed under the auspices of the Fellowship as instruments of teaching; in addition, to communicate, through center directors from time to time by letter or word of mouth, information and directives to Fellowship members; to maintain and distribute current information about the activities and services at Renaissance to enable visiting Fellowship members to take full advantage of the available opportunities.

4.4.5 Donation Policies

To gather information about the effect of donation policies on the members of the Fellowship and to advise the Board of Directors accordingly.

4.4.6 Education

To support the undertakings of Fellowship members to provide for the education of the members in literature and the humanities, the fine arts, and the performing arts that will foster their spiritual growth and culture; also to support, and provide guidance for, the efforts of parents to educate their children.

4.4.7 Funerals and Burial Service

To cooperate with the Cemetery Committee appointed by the Board of Directors to provide for the burial of the mortal remains of Fellowship members in Renaissance Cemetery according to the Fellowship Ministry Manual, and, in consultation with the Teacher, to establish policies regarding such burials.

4.4.8 Requesting Necessary Funds

To request the Board of Directors to allocate such funds that shall be necessary to promote the spiritual aims of the Church.

4.4.9 Church Court

To participate in the proceedings of the Church Court and the Responsible Church Court according to the conditions specified in the By-Laws of the Fellowship.

I DREAM'D IN A DREAM

I dream'd in a dream I saw a city invincible to
the attacks of the whole of the rest of the earth,
I dream'd that was the new city of Friends,
Nothing was greater there than the quality of
robust love, it led the rest.
It was seen every hour in the actions of the men
of that city,
And in all their looks and words.

Walt Whitman

* * *