

## 1. THE BERLIN WALL

We have come to a time in our history when we need to start looking at things differently, start seeing things differently. For so long we have taken the view that we need to control our environment and more importantly control ourselves. This has taken the form of rules and regulations from without, from other people, from convention, from our collective group. We need to start thinking and doing it for ourselves, our way.

We have collectively placed so much emphasis on the afterlife, we have often not paid attention to what we have here, what we are here, what we are capable of becoming.

For it is so easy to place obstacles between ourselves and our dreams, not least because we tend to see ourselves as too small, ineffective and powerless. And in our efforts to control ourselves and our environments we have tended to organise ourselves in groups, be they of colour, creed, race, religion or simply by geographic proximity. And these ways we have created of organising ourselves are not working anymore. And we know it.

Now is the time when individually we need to start listening to ourselves, paying attention to ourselves to find out who we want to be, how we want to behave and what kind of world we want to live in. For if we want to change the world, we can only change ourselves. This is all we can do.

And in spite of our fears and our protestations to the contrary we can change what we are doing, what we are choosing, and feel better about ourselves and our lives. For it is to find out who we are and what we came here to do which is the greatest work we can ever know. To be ciphers for the delusions of others is not a life worth living.

For of the virtues which have been preached to us for millennia perhaps the greatest virtue is kindness and we need to be more attentive to being kind to ourselves.

For we live collectively as well as individually. And the burgeoning and expansion of scientific and technological advances and most recently advances in communication, have had an enormous effect on us of late. We have discoveries such as the internet which literally prove to us that we are all connected.

These developments have a profound effect on us. We can feel swamped and overwhelmed by the information that we choose to receive, that we let into our lives, and this can leave us feeling powerless. We have reached a point where many of us believe that there is nothing we can do to make a difference in our own lives. Nor do we know how to make a meaningful contribution to life and live in such a way that makes us feel that we matter.

We need to stop accepting substitutes. For in this morass of information and pressure of population we seek to find ourselves and what matters to us and to separate the wheat from the

chaff in our lives. This process involves patience and discrimination and discernment. We need to discover the fillers which keep us from ourselves, the substitutes we choose for we fear what we really want to do and be, we fear what we could be.

In many ways the effect of our scientific advancements has granted us this time. We are now free from the drudgery which occupied our forebears, we are now free from relentless reproduction if we choose. The technological advancements of the last 50 years are such that we now have the liberty to create a world for ourselves and future generations free from dogma and slavish conformity with others for whatever reason, be it fashion, religion, political ideology or racial superiority.

For the Berlin Wall was a symbol of profound significance. Its fall was a literal breaking of the barrier between two ideologies which were competing for dominance in the world. And we need to break down our internal barriers to find out who we are and start living it. For we are so many of us fearful to be ourselves and yet to be ourselves and stop accepting substitutes for being is so important and takes time and silence, thoughtfulness and care and doing nothing.