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FOURFOLD VISION

William Blake once wrote these words to his friend, Thomas Butts:

"Now I a fourfold vision see,
And a fourfold vision is given to me:
'Tis fourfold in my supreme delight
And threefold in soft Beulah's night
And twofold always, may God us keep
From single vision and Newton's sleep!"

Fourfold vision is to single vision as ordinary sight is to blindness. We all experience single and threefold vision. It's twofold and fourfold vision that one must consciously work to achieve.

A hardheaded, common-sensed, rational man sees with his single vision. To him, a man is a man, a tree is a tree, a rose is a rose, and a dog is a dog. The idea that imagination could create reality would be sheer nonsense to him, and he would think you mad if you tried to tell him so. Being rational, the single-vision man lives in a world where things are what they seem to be. In that world everything can be weighed and measured, a minute is sixty seconds, and a pound is sixteen ounces - no more or no less. Blake refers to that kind of man as Newton's sleep, saying: "May God us keep from single vision and Newton's sleep."

Twofold vision occurs when everything is seen as an image. I have stood before a fireplace and enjoyed its warmth and light. I have watched the flames leap up and subside, fall into embers, then turn into ash and - to all appearances - vanish. And I have said to myself: "My life is like a fire." At that moment I achieved a simile. I didn't stop there, however, but said: "Life is fire. My life is fire." Having achieved a metaphor, I dropped the "is" and said to myself, "Life and fire are similar. I will never again see one and not see the other, or feel one and not imagine the other." At that moment I had achieved a symbol, a poetic image. Fire is now an image which reminds me of life.

Verdi once said: "All things transient are but images." Is there anything here that is not transient? I have a friend who recently discovered two love birds had nested near his window, with three eggs in their nest. My friend now has fourteen days of waiting for them to hatch out. They will come forth, much to his pleasure, wax, wane, and then vanish. They, like all things transient, are but symbols; and if you will but turn the object seen into its symbol, twofold vision will be yours.

Mr. [William] Hayley, a man who thought himself a poet (although only a few of his pieces that Blake illustrated have survived) was a man of considerable wealth. He gave Blake a home with a beautiful garden, for him, his wife, and sister to live in. One day Blake found a drunken soldier stretched out in his garden. When the man refused to leave Blake took him by the elbows and marched him out of the garden.

Now a garden does not just happen. Man must be present to transform a plot into a garden, which must be planted and cared for or it will go to seed. Blake saw the drunken soldier (one of the forces) as the symbol of his spiritual enemy, yet physical friend. You see, although Mr. Hayley had fed and sheltered Blake he wanted no part of his poetry or artistic work, so he was Blake's spiritual enemy. Of him Blake wrote: "I can tolerate my physical enemy, but not my spiritual one, for he destroys my creative power."

Blake saw everything in his life as a symbol. To him the sun was not a round disk in the sky, but a host of angels singing: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty." Always thinking in symbols, twofold vision was always his.

Threefold vision is yours when the images begin to dream, to have love affairs, marry, and beget. Your dreams of the day and night are threefold vision, which Blake calls "soft Beulah's night". Your moods are your dreams in daylight, forming a threefold vision. Capture a mood which would imply the fulfillment of your desire, then become so intense in that threefold vision that you enter your fulfilled desire, and you will move into fourfold vision.

Having entered this dream of life, man has forgotten where he laid himself down to sleep. Thoreau once said: "The truest life is to be in a dream, awake." Once this world was only a dream, but man became so intense, he awoke in his dream and turned to single vision in place of reality.

Now, this world has become the stream of reality. Knowing this, start to assemble images in your mind that, if true, would imply the fulfillment of your desire. Let the images play together, interweave, fall in love, and reach fulfillment.

Let me illustrate by telling a story which a friend recently shared with me. For some time he had an objective problem which he did nothing about, imaginatively. Then one day while in his office, he constructed a scene which if true would imply that the problem had been solved and his desire fulfilled. He ran through the scene several times in his mind, then entered it to rehearse the voices and scenery there. Breaking his concentration, he finished work and returned to his home. That night he again entered the scene, and as it became alive he fell asleep and had this dream.

He was a disembodied observer of a party given to congratulate a young man who had just come into a great fortune. Congratulating the young man he asked: "How did you accomplish this?" And the man replied in a most embarrassing way: "It was so easy. I simply did what I should have done a long time ago." Upon hearing this statement, my friend entered into the spirit of that young man and felt his embarrassment and unworthiness. Then once again becoming the observer, he heard the young man say: "It was not a vicarious thrill. Entering the state, I actually experienced the sensation."

My friend seemed to be observing someone else - but there is no one else! Humanity is a single being, in spite of its millions of forms and figures. There is seeming separation, as divined in our own being when we were dramatically sundered, thereby causing a seeming other to play the part we wrote for ourselves. My friend wrote the script and played the parts by entering into a fourfold vision. In so doing, he carried it into his own intensity.

We are all asunder, as every being is self, made visible. You have given yourself every individual in your world as an image, and you alone know what he represents.

A friend saw his mother as an image of the material world. A wonderful mystical experience followed this realization, when my friend found himself, as a young man, standing in a suite of rooms looking out to sea. Having written a letter to his mother, he opened the front door to find a lady standing there. Then he said: "I was going to mail this letter to my mother, but now I remember that she is dead." The lady agreed saying: "Yes, she died a long, long time ago." This statement surprised him, for in our measure of time it had only been a few months. Then he asked: "Hasn't my mother been paying for these rooms?" And the lady replied: "No. The undertaker has. He felt it better that you think she was providing for you until you awoke and came to your senses."

This gentleman is on the verge of complete waking into an entirely different age. No one knows the day it will happen. He will not depart, however, one hour before his time, neither can he delay it one hour. Scripture tells us: "Who, by taking thought can add one hour to his span of time?"

You need not be anxious, because you cannot postpone or hasten your departure, in spite of heart transplants and life-extending diets. You will notice, however, that all the dietitians, doctors, and health addicts do not live one hour longer than those who are not!

I have a friend in Barbados who, during prohibition was so drunk I had to pour him on a boat for the mainland. This man would drink anything that contained alcohol. Now a man in his eighties, he is still drinking as far as I know, while all of the doctors who warned him that if he continued it would kill him are now dead. He only vegetates today, having lost his sight, but he is learning his lesson in his own way. God, the Father in him, is dreaming his dream of life. One day he will come to his senses and realize that the world is but himself pushed out.

In each one of us God the Father awakes, for He is one, not two. It is Christ who is dreaming and it is Christ who awakens in this gentleman and this lady, in that gentleman and that lady, as the one Father. He awakens as the one who begot the dream. Therefore there is only one body, one Spirit, One Lord, one God and Father of all. So you see: this fourfold vision is within the experience of all.

Everyone has experienced single vision, but everything in this world started as a dream. The room you are in began as a dream in the mind of someone. Its plans were executed in the mind of another. Now it has entered the stream of reality we call fact, yet it is still a dream; for its origin was a dream and its end is a dream, as all things bring forth after their kind.

If you have a desire to supplant what you have now, you must start by assuming it is a dream. And when it objectifies itself and enters the stream of reality, may I tell you: it will still be dream. Imagination is the creative power which can cause that which was not, to be! It can also cause that which is, not to be; therefore, it not only creates, but un-creates. This power is God.

My friend knows this law and has applied it beautifully time and time again; yet we are all careless and often think a problem will take care of itself, but it will not. The power to change anything will lie dormant unless we operate it, as Imagination does not operate itself.

Begin now to practice the art of imagining every day. A concert pianist must constantly practice. for if he does not and he is called upon to give a concert he would not be ready. You must practice the art of imagining day after day so that when you are faced with a problem you will not put it aside, but will do something about it and move from soft Beulah's night into fourfold vision. Blake confessed that his greatest ecstasy was in fourfold vision because it is the fulfillment of scripture, of which he was a great student.

In the 13th chapter of the Book of Proverbs, we are told: "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life." If you want something, it is not going to come into being by saying: "I will have it some day." That is deferring your hope and making your heart sick. But if you believe that imagining creates reality, you will build a stage, paint the scenery, and place lovely images there. Then you will let them interweave so that when you bring that scenery back into your mind, the actors will come alive and say the words you had dictated for them to say.

The scene's power is in its implication. In my friend's case the young man was being congratulated because something very important had happened in his life and it had been so easily accomplished.

A few years ago a friend had a few skin cancers on his face. The doctor would give him no more radiation, so every day as my friend shaved he saw his face clear of all blemishes. Today he cannot remember when they disappeared, but they are now gone, with no trace of ever having been present. So Imagination can not only bring things into being, it can take things away! It can un-create whatever it creates.

In this wonderful world we have created nightmares which we cannot endure forever, so they will have to be uncreated. That is why I urge everyone to live nobly. Sow your mind with ideas worthy of recall, because the day is coming when that which is built on any foundation other than Christ will be consumed or uncreated. You will survive, but only as through fire.

We bring all kinds of unpleasant things into our world and live with them until we discover we can un-create them. Just as my friend uncreated the blemishes he had placed there and he cannot tell you the moment they disappeared. You have the power to create and un-create. Having brought something unlovely into your world, you can un-create it if you are willing to create something in its place, and persist until your desire becomes fourfold.

This world, although three dimensional, is fourfold, for your dream has caused the world to enter the stream of reality. At this moment I am looking at you singly and in a threefold manner. If I see you as an image, representing other than what you appear to be, I am seeing you twofold. And when I meet you in soft Beulah's night I will understand what you are trying to tell me in my fourfold dream.

A friend told me that I represent Christ to him. That when he conjures me in his dreams, he knows that the image of God's power and wisdom is speaking to him through the voice of his friend called Neville. Neville is only a symbol, as he should be. I am a symbol and everyone sees me differently, for I am in every being just as you are, for God is one. Now fragmented, the world is God made visible and God's name forever and ever is I AM!

The next time you see a fire in the fireplace think of it as the symbol of life. Achieve a poetic image by never

seeing one and not thinking of the other. As you look at the fire and feel its warmth something will begin to stir within you, and from then on twofold vision will be yours.

Start with one image and it will become two, then four, then eight as everything will form an image in your mind. Blake saw everything as an image. To the world Scofield was a lonely soldier asleep in a garden. But, because Blake's garden was the image of his creativity, finding a sleeping, drunken soldier there was like finding him in his wife's bed, so Blake removed him. Although a very small man in stature, Blake had the courage of a giant, and removed that which was the symbol of his spiritual enemy.

Start now to experiment with these four types of vision. Unless you are physically blind you have single vision. When you see another meaning to that which appears to be, you are beginning to have twofold vision. This world is threefold, and when you imagine something other than that which you are now tied to and occupy it, the thrill of fourfold vision will be yours. Then when you sit down to prepare your dream, its occupants and scenery will become alive, their voices will be heard, their friendly touch felt, and fourfold vision will be your supreme delight!

Do not expect your desire to be fulfilled overnight, for all things have an interval of time between their planting and their entrance into the stream of life called reality. But I urge you to practice, practice, and continue to practice, for you are moving into a world where all is Imagination and you will create at will. You won't have to travel by any worldly means to visit Europe, Asia, or any foreign country, for everything and every means necessary to objectify your thought is within you.

Truly, you have never left your eternal home. You are sleeping there, dreaming this world into being. Before falling asleep you were called a prince and told that you were gods, sons of the Most High. You would however die like men and fall as one man.

Now, in order to be a prince, your father must be a king. Well, your Father is the King of kings, the Lord of lords, and together we form the one Lord, for God is one. We descended in consciousness, and made our dreams so real by entering into the stream that they took on the tones of reality.

As our eye opened upon the scene, single vision caused us to become locked in the prison of our senses and reason. Now we have become practical, down-to-earth, hardheaded men who know that life is a battle and we must take advantage of everyone before he takes advantage of us.

We pile up our millions, and then the Father says it's time to go; so we slip off this little garment to put on another - just like this one, only young, with nothing missing. There, we continue our single vision until we come to our senses and awaken.

The man with single vision thinks the great mother earth is paying the rent and providing for him. The undertaker will allow him to think so until he awakens and comes to his senses.

Do not postpone your dreams and do not think that because you heard what to do, your desires will come to pass. It's so easy to hear the truth and postpone the doing. But I urge you to be like my friend: stop postponing and do what you want to have done, for if you do, it will come to pass.

Now let us go into the silence.