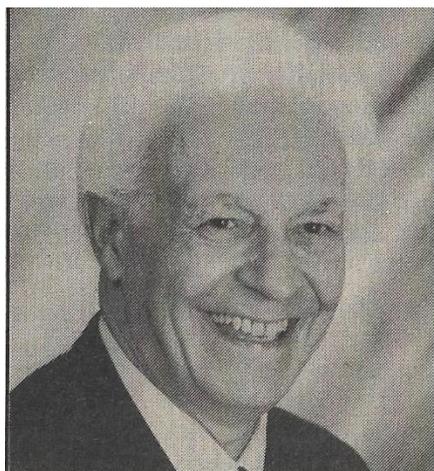


Lives In Excellence



A Conversation with Dr. Paul Leon Masters By Kathryn M. Peters

Dear Friends of 'In Light Times', beautiful summer greetings. How happy I am to introduce you to Dr. Paul Leon Masters this month as our featured "Life In Excellence." Dr. Masters is the founder of California's University of Metaphysics, which since its inception in 1976 has become the world's largest metaphysically oriented higher education course of its kind. In 1989 Las Vegas was fortunate enough to become the home of Nevada's first University of Metaphysics. As an alumni of the University, I personally vouch for the integrity of this spiritual instruction. And I know that integrity is funneled into the courses directly from the heart and soul of the man of vision and honesty who created them. You know, it is all too obvious that we are residing in an age when all too few men and women of moral fabric dare to speak their minds. They fear being judged and labeled as insensitive to what is popularly regarded as politically correct. All the more reason why it was such a refreshing experience to converse with Dr. Masters recently. He is a man of high spiritual principle who is unafraid to speak the truth as he sees it. In my opinion, Dr. Paul Leon Masters is one of the true leaders in the field of metaphysics and a priceless edition to the spiritual community of Las Vegas.

Kathryn Peters: "Good Morning, how are you doing today?"

Dr. Masters: "Pretty good, thank you."

Kathryn Peters: "Dr. Masters, for those readers of 'In Light Times' who may not be familiar with the University, can you give me a brief history and description of the University?"

Dr. Masters: "The University was the outcome of something that started in 1959. I first started teaching and doing research with the ideal of having an institution of higher learning because the field itself did not have such an institution at that time; whatever there was, was sort of quasi or shady in terms of its operation. So, as I taught for a number of years, more and more that thought became dominant. Then in 1976 we formalized a university with the state of California."

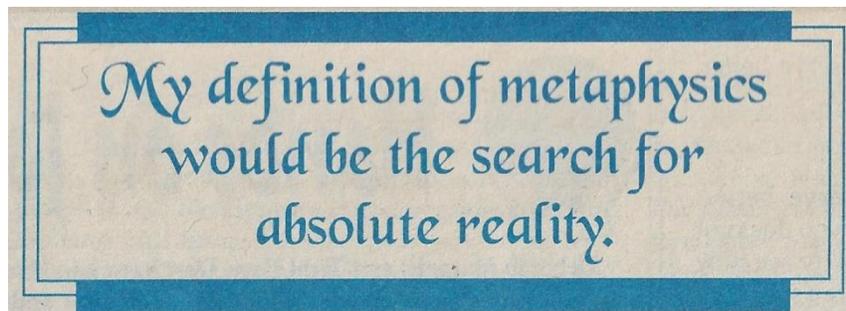
Kathryn Peters: "Does the University have something to offer all students of metaphysics or does one have to be involved or inclined toward a ministry to benefit from your courses?"

Dr. Masters: "The courses can benefit anybody. Many people will enroll originally for the idea of earning some type of credential, yet, as they go along, they'll find the studies help them as far as their own personal life is concerned."

The ministry is part of the setup simply because the degrees are religious in nature in accordance with the state of California. So it involves some form of commitment to the teaching and ministerial function.”

Kathryn Peters: “Dr. Masters, what long range role do you see the University playing in the world as we get closer to the turn of the century?”

Dr. Masters: “Well, the whole of society is going downhill rapidly. I mean there is a spiritual void right and left, and traditional religion does not answer that call. Therefore, anything that deals with seminaries turning out traditional religionists isn’t making it as far as the public and the spiritual void they’re feeling. In the field of metaphysics itself, there is such a variance that there isn’t anything that is really taking the total of the field under consideration. People that go into this field now get stuck into one little area, they call that metaphysics and it really isn’t ... the word has become a “catch-all” word for a number of things.”



Kathryn Peters: “What is your definition of metaphysics?”

Dr. Masters: “My definition of metaphysics would be the search for absolute reality. The search for: Who am I? What am I? Where have I been? Where am I going? What is the relationship of man, mind and the Universe? If you can answer those questions, you can find your place in life. If you can’t, then it doesn’t matter, you’re just a wanderer.”

Kathryn Peters: “In your view, why are we here? What is the purpose of life on Earth?”

Dr. Masters: “The purpose of life on Earth basically is to express the One Intelligence that has taken image, shape, form, and embodiment in each and every one of us. Think of it as a giant diamond that covers the entirety of infinity that is glistening from an inner light that it gives off and each one of us is like a facet of that one infinite spiritual diamond. Each of us has taken embodiment within the mind of that infinite beingness to reflect certain attributes and uniqueness. Each of us, like a thought form in the mind of God, are within a cosmic type of dream ... the dream having a purpose of self-fulfillment and self-happiness. To see how far within that dream state, the cosmic dreamstate that is God, who in God’s mind, is devoted to a constant refinement of that total universal type of nature. Now this is rather abstract and it’s difficult to grasp, but it is God’s Self-Contemplation for the purpose of improving and constantly refining ourselves.”

Kathryn Peters: “In order to perfect Spirit ...”

Dr. Masters: “Yes, Spirit perfecting itself within itself.”

Kathryn Peters: “Okay, wow! So we play a very important role here no matter what we’re doing?”

Dr. Masters: “We’re inseparable from what’s going on, on a cosmic scale, even though our lives look very finite.”

Kathryn Peters: “In your life was there one specific incident or event that turned your mind towards answering those questions?”

Dr. Masters: “No, not particularly. This was something that was just native to what and who I was as I went through my early childhood. Through my teens I just had a natural feeling that there was a deeper mystery to life and that was something that I wanted to probe into. I started with the field of psychology and when that didn’t answer it I then went into yoga, then into meditation. It was probably the result of meditational experiences more than anything else.”

Kathryn Peters: “What guidance did you receive through those meditations?”

Dr. Masters: It was the guidance of being able to see into other dimensions of life, being able to realize that other dimensions exist, which finally culminated in the experience of what is called ‘Nirvana’ or ‘Union with God’ or ‘Cosmic Consciousness’ ... or whatever name you choose to give it. You know Kathryn, most of what we call metaphysics today is being handled by people who really have not had these experiences, cannot really speak with any authority and are just parroting away. There are very, very few that are inspired from the experience themselves.”

Kathryn Peters: “Now you’ve opened a church in Las Vegas. How does your church differ from other New Thought churches?”

Dr. Masters: “Most New Thought churches will concentrate only on western metaphysics ... which deal with the concepts of practical living, getting more money, getting a better car, getting the right soulmate etc. That’s only half of the pie. The approach we take is blending in eastern mysticism that is using yoga techniques, using eastern forms of deep meditation to encourage higher states of consciousness so that the person can actually make contact with the God-Source they are affirming. Affirming means absolutely nothing, if you are not in contact. The only way you can get into contact is through deeper forms of meditation. Then you have some type of substance and foundation from what we call more the western of New Thought Metaphysics.

Kathryn Peters: “So what I hear you saying is, all these books out there that are full of affirmations to bring a person wealth, prosperity and health ...”

Dr. Masters: “Are just cerebral exercise!”

Kathryn Peters: “And therefore will do no good if we are not in direct contact?”

Dr. Masters: “Let me quote Christ, it isn’t my idea. He said very simply, “For all their vain repetition, they will not be heard.” In modern terms, that equates to affirmations. That is why you can observe people who have been in any type of setting, in religious settings, in metaphysics where they have been there for 20-30 years and are just as neurotic, just as broken down and haven’t demonstrated a thing in their life. But they have been affirming until they are blue in the face. Until you have actually gotten into that Source within yourself, until you have really opened yourself up, until you have a commitment to that above everything else in life, then it’s just game playing.”

Kathryn Peters: “So is meditation the only way to our Source?”

Dr. Masters: “Unless a person has a spontaneous type of experience which can happen ...”

Kathryn Peters: “A satori?”

Dr. Masters: “It can be called satori, it can be called anything. The thing is they can have a spontaneous experience of cosmic consciousness.”

Kathryn Peters: “But this does not usually happen to the normal person.”

Dr. Masters: “No, it really does not because they’re so taken up in the world and all the stimuli that’s coming in from the outside that they are just repressing anything that can emerge from the inside ... unless, of course, they experience a traumatic situation. As Christ put it, “*Verily I say unto you that the harlot shall enter the kingdom of heaven before you do.*” In other words, when a person is sometimes down, there is so much absolute pressure, they have nowhere else to go, then it can flip over and they can go deeper inside themselves and have that spontaneous experience.”

Kathryn Peters: “So, what would you say are the keys to spiritual mastery? Of course, meditation would be one and do you believe in affirmation?”

Dr. Masters: “I would believe in affirmations in terms of the conscious mind which is more where the affirmative situation takes place if it is in agreement with or is being inspired by the center of the unconscious mind or the God-Mind. In other words, the affirmations we have on the surface should not come from our personal ego, but should be put there by the God part of our mind. If they are put there from the God part of our mind, then the conscious part of our mind becomes attuned to what the God-Mind has put in there.”

Kathryn Peters: “So the keys to spiritual mastery are?”

Dr. Masters: “The keys to spiritual mastery are first, meditate and then believe no one.”

Kathryn Peters: “Believe no one?”

Dr. Masters: “Believe no one, that’s right! In my lectures you’ll hear it constantly. Don’t believe me, don’t believe the pope, don’t believe anybody. That leaves you with only one thing ... yourself and that’s where it begins and ends. And if that sounds rather cold, well that coldness comes and creates a clarity of mind in which you had Christ go out into the desert for 40 days and 40 nights, you had Buddha sit under the Bodhi tree for such a long period of time until he reached enlightenment ... in other words, you’ve got to get to the point where you depend upon only the *inner guru*.”

Kathryn Peters: “And what, in your opinion keeps people from searching for their inner guru, Dr. Masters?”

Dr. Masters: “They are frightened to take the responsibility for themselves. They have been taught from the time they were children always to look for some type of outer savior. I’m not talking about a Messiah in a religious sense. It could be a father, a mother, a relative, big brother sitting in the White House, it can be any number of things. The projection is always outside, it keeps the person throughout their entire life distracted from getting inside themselves.”

Kathryn Peters: “Isn’t that amazing? Well, you put on an annual convention and this year (1996) it’s going to be from June 23rd to the 28th at the Aladdin Hotel and Casino. Is there a theme to your conventions every year?”

Dr. Masters: “There has been a theme. This year we decided to do a smorgasbord where we went from alchemy to Zen, from A to Z ... that is all the major subjects. We haven’t covered every one of them, but we will cover most of the things that people are interested in. The whole purpose of this convention is to take all of these loose ends, all of these separate fields of thought and find a common denominator within them all. The idea is that if a speaker presents something about auras, they are told beforehand to tie this in to the spiritual nature of the human being.”

Kathryn Peters: “Can anyone attend your convention, or do they have to be a student of the University?”

Dr. Masters: “Up to last year, we had it just for the students and the graduates and members of their classes and churches. This year we opened it up to the general public of Las Vegas because of the church facility we have here now.”

Kathryn Peters: “Have you had a wonderful response to that?”

Dr. Masters: “We’ve had a very good response ... I wouldn’t call it wonderful!” (laughter).

Kathryn Peters: “Laughter ... okay. Well, once the word gets out that everyone is invited ... I’m sure it will be wonderful. So for the average person attending the conference ... what is it you hope they come away with this year?”

Dr. Masters: “I hope they come away with the idea that here we have all of this vast array of subjects that are being taught by so many different people, each in their own particular individualized school of thought, yet there is also a mystical thread that runs through it all. We hope to tie them up in a pretty spiritual package to see how they interrelate. If we can pick up all the loose ends of all these different fields of interests now going under the metaphysical label, and tie them together, that in and of itself would be a major, major accomplishment for the majority of people.”

Kathryn Peters: “Indeed it would be. What is that mystical thread? How do you define it?”

Dr. Masters: “The mystical thread is that same thing referred to as the beingness of the infinite that exists within us, but not as words, not as a bunch of metaphysical spiritual jargon, but as a living reality. Not an intellectual exercise, but a true life inner experience within the individual which is a night and day difference from the intellectual.”

Kathryn Peters: “So, you want to give seekers practical tools for implementing spiritual theory to help them apply these principles to everyday life.”

Dr. Masters: “That would be the outcome and the outgrowth of it, but the first thing is that they’ve got to first find this thing within themselves. Again, I emphasize, it’s not an intellectual, philosophical, or theological theory no matter how much that might appeal to each individual, because they still haven’t made contact. You can sit in front of a television set hour after hour and hope the picture will go on, but if it’s not plugged into the wall, forget it!”

Kathryn Peters: “So there’s no way to reach God except through the brain?”

Dr. Masters: “The brain is not the mind. The mind is a field of energy that uses the brain. So if we get into the mind, then we have to go to the deeper levels of the unconscious until finally we by-pass all consciousness, including what

Jung called the “*collective unconsciousness*” into the realm of what we term pure spirit which is consciousness, but not consciousness as would normally be thought of.”

Kathryn Peters: “And how does it differ?”

Dr. Masters: “It differs in the sense that it, in itself is not an “I-Thou” type of relationship. It simply is. Until we get to that point, it is always an “I-Thou” i.e., we are meditating, we are seeing something, we are reacting to something rather than simply experiencing a state of beingness. There is nothing to perceive, other than to know. That’s abstract, I know. I’m not trying to avoid the question, that’s just the way it is.”

Kathryn Peters: “Dr. Masters, earlier you were saying that society is basically going to hell in a hand basket right now. What is your vision of the future and how are we going to pull out of this dilemma?”

Dr. Masters: “The way that I see it right now is that the majority of society is going down the tubes, and you have a few individuals that are getting stronger. But these are very few and that includes people that are in the metaphysical and New Thought fields. I mean they’re just as neurotic as the person who is either an atheist or agnostic or someone who is a member of a fundamentalist religion. There really isn’t that much difference. Sometimes it has to get very, very dark before the dawn and I don’t foresee society absolutely coming to pieces. Today we suffer from a lack of leadership. Leadership is only established by the consciousness of the people who elect them. So, if you have a neurotic society, you’re going to have neurotic leaders. An egocentric society will have egocentric leaders and as this progresses it gets more and more out of control until eventually you get to a point where you have a dictatorship. The people become so desperate for relief from crime, from all the other things that are plaguing them that it results in a breakdown of government suddenly giving rise to a fanatic promising relief to the people.”

Kathryn Peters: “So there’s nothing going on in our external world that is not a reflection of what’s going on within individuals that make up our world?”

Dr. Masters: “That’s it within the collective individualism of the world. In Russia, the head of the Russian party there is getting drunk most of the time. It was estimated on recent broadcast of ‘60 Minutes’ that the average Russian is consuming a half quart of vodka per day. We also are experiencing more and more the disappearance of the middle class as to where you have the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’. You have the strong that prey upon the weak and the weak getting more desperate, ready to overthrow the strong ...so it’s just a repeat of a lot of things for history tends to repeat itself.”

Kathryn Peters: “So what’s going to make a difference?”

Dr. Masters: “The difference will be made through the efforts of a very few strong individuals. There are very, very few of them who step forward in their particular countries, their particular cultures having seen the need and attempting to reinstate the spirituality within their particular peoples. This isn’t going to take place over night. It’s not going to take place by some Messiah-type figure suddenly appearing on the face of this earth. And it must be done without creating any other spiritual fantasies which is also a problem that is taking place right now.”

Kathryn Peters: “In what way?”

Dr. Masters: “You have a lot of groups and individuals, worldwide, concocting what I call “spiritual science fiction”. For example, some are saying we have to save the planet by adjusting the grid. It’s total nonsense, it’s total fabrication preying upon minds that know a little bit of truth ... so, they sprinkle a little bit of truth on them which tends to justify the spiritual science fiction part of it, creating fantasy lands for these people to dwell in, which allows them to dwell in a vacuum rather than dealing with their real problem, their spiritual growth on a day-to-day basis.”

Kathryn Peters: “Do you feel the creation of this spiritual science fiction is part of the ‘Anti-Christ’? Is it simply another way of diverting these people from true spiritual exploration?”

Dr. Masters: “If there were an “Anti-Christ”, Kathryn, it certainly would be within the parameters of what would be taking place to form distractions, to keep people away from exploring themselves or getting in touch with themselves ... always something to distract, always a diversion.”

Kathryn Peters: “Are there any spiritual leaders today that you support, that you would tell our readers to support ... besides yourself of course?”

Dr. Masters: “My feeling is, as an example, at the convention, we are honoring Manly P. Hall who was an enormous contributor. His widow, who is 92 years old will be there to accept an award for his contributions.”

Kathryn Peters: “How exciting.”

Dr. Masters: “It is exciting ... she’s a pip ... she really is. She’s 92 years old and she sounds like she is 18 if you get on the phone with her. He was one that I respected. Krishnamurti was another one that I respected. Marcus Bach has done a lot with comparative religion. There are some good ones.

Kathryn Peters: “Is there anybody in the forefront right now that you particularly respect who is still here and very active?”

Dr. Masters: “Spirituality runs in cycles. In the ‘60s, the Maharishi brought to the forefront meditation. It was a very narrow form of meditation, but at least it caused people to explore all of the other schools of meditation. Then we have the EST movements and so forth. We had all the Human Potential movements in the ‘70s that sort of came and went. In more recent years, obviously the person who’s been more to the forefront, using the medical profession as the backdrop is Deepak Chopra. Though his metaphysical teachings are no more profound than what you will find on the average bookshelf, it is just that he has established himself through alternative medicine which caught the public’s fancy. I think that Wayne Dyer has also done a good job. I think Andrew Weil, another medical physician, has written really beautiful books in terms of understanding the real healing process which overlaps into spirituality. Larry Dossey, too, has done a great job and he is also an M.D. It looks like the general public is looking for some type of medical practitioner as the next Messiah. It almost seems that if they have medical credentials ...”

Kathryn Peters: “Well, they have been the gods of the past.”

Dr. Masters: “Well, they have been the gods and now they’re walking into the metaphysical field. I had one person recently say to me, “Well, Chopra must be the great guru of the time.” This person was really sincere when he said it, but that isn’t necessarily true. It’s almost like we have now a spiritual cult forming and hanging around Chopra. If you’ve seen any of his television things when he’s talking metaphysics it sort of reminds me of the ‘60s when some guru would fly in from India and all these people with new age baited breath, and a vacant stare in their eyes, would be saying, “Oh my god, it’s so wonderful.”

Kathryn Peters: “So since the 1960s we have a real fascination with Eastern philosophy?”

Dr. Masters: “We do because really the basis of all our western metaphysics really comes from the East, if it’s worth anything.”

Kathryn Peters: “How true. Dr. Masters, our time has flown by and my last question is how do you hope to be remembered in all this?”

Dr. Masters: “I’ll leave that up to whoever wants to remember me. I’m sure some will remember me as the great bastard and others will remember me as a fairly decent person.”

Kathryn Peters: “Well, I think you are a wonderful person and I have so enjoyed talking with you. Thank you for your time today.”

Dr. Masters: “Thank you Kathryn.”