

Introduction

Some background information about the messages, taken from the book:

The Gospel of God's Love -- the Padgett Messages

Sometime in 1914, a respected Washington D.C. lawyer named James E. Padgett started receiving "automatic writings" from his wife, Helen, who'd passed over earlier that year. Such happenings were perhaps less cause for wonderment at the time than they might be today, given the fact that the Spiritualist movement sweeping over America and Europe (starting with the "table rappings" of the Fox sisters in 1850) was at its height. Reputable scientists, academics, and public figures enthusiastically discussed the phenomenon of spirit communication in those years, and it was not until the 1920's, when a debunking campaign spearheaded by Harry Houdini exposed widespread fraud among professional mediums, that spirit communication became more the subject of jokes than of serious research.

Given this climate of widespread interest in spirit communication, it's perhaps not even remarkable that Padgett was also a practicing Christian, who sometimes taught Sunday school at his Methodist church. This was an era of spiritual tumult, as the colliding forces of religious tradition and scientific innovation yielded an assortment of new spiritual movements, even while the growing influence of secular society seemed poised to make all religion obsolete. In this landscape of shifting and blurring boundaries, it's perhaps easier to understand why a churchgoer like Padgett would have dared venture into territory that was considered off limits by virtually all of traditional Christianity.

In retrospect, it might seem like the perfect moment in history for what happened next. Padgett's grandmother, Ann Rollins, who'd been in the spirit world for some time, also began delivering messages through Padgett's hand, and shared with him her revised understanding of the precepts of Christianity. When Padgett expressed incredulity, Rollins suggested that Jesus himself would be happy to corroborate her declarations. While Padgett was not at all inclined to believe that the second person of the Trinity would resort to automatic writing, yet he'd admired his grandmother as a good and devoutly religious person while on earth, and realized that the testimony of such a reliable witness could not be ignored.

Rollins explained that before Jesus could write, Padgett would first need to attain the necessary "spiritual condition" for an adequate rapport, and that this could be accomplished if Padgett would dedicate himself to praying sincerely and persistently for what she called "divine love." Padgett complied as best he could, and before long found himself receiving his first message signed "Jesus of the Bible."

Incredulity apparently getting the best of him, Padgett threw that first message away. But despite his disbelief and trepidation, he could scarcely discontinue his investigations: if it really was Jesus writing, Padgett certainly didn't want to be the one to deny him the opportunity.

In the messages that followed, Jesus presented ideas that differed dramatically from the orthodox teachings that Padgett had believed all his life. The clash between religious tradition and scientific discovery suddenly took on a very personal aspect, Padgett's own mind and soul becoming its field of battle. On the one hand, this spirit calling himself Jesus was adamant in his declarations, which were corroborated by a variety of other biblical figures, as well as by Padgett's wife and other family members (whose identities he could recognize and positively confirm). On the other hand, he was well aware that most of Christianity considered spirit communication to be the exclusive province of the devil.

Most intriguingly, though, Padgett realized that the writings were providing some very plausible and helpful explanations and elucidations of various passages of the Bible. He also sensed that the very nature of the messages seemed to refute any suggestion of a "demonic" origin. Despite his initial disbelief and dismay, and overcoming his well-honed lawyerly skepticism, Padgett eventually became convinced that the messages were authentic. So also did his friend Leslie Stone, who was often present during the messages' reception, and observed how they came "in a rapid sweep of connected words, that obviously gave no time for thought on the part of the writer." Stone eventually dedicated his life to the work of publishing and disseminating the messages. So were these writings actually delivered by Jesus of Nazareth? Or were they merely the product of Padgett's subconscious imaginings? Or worse still, were they the product of a deceiving spirit--perhaps even the "Father of Lies" himself?

When it comes to that which forms the basis for a person's spiritual convictions, we firmly believe that there can and should be no substitute for personal experience and discernment; so probably the best response we can offer to these questions is the time-honored "You be the judge." It's so often the case that neither words nor even physical evidence can adequately communicate one person's spiritual experience to another; and so we can only encourage you to take time to fully investigate and "try out" these teachings for yourself, before reaching your own conclusions as to their accuracy and usefulness.

That being said, it may be helpful, before diving into the messages, to quickly address a few of the questions that often confront new readers:

One question often asked is: "If Jesus needed to correct the teachings of the Bible, why did he wait so long to do so?" As we've noted, spirit communication has been forbidden in the Christian world from the time of Constantine up to and including the present-and often under penalty of death. Not until the relative safety of the 20th century would the average practicing Christian have considered even the possibility of receiving a channeled message from Jesus.

A skeptic might then ask why Jesus would need a "practicing Christian" to communicate through. This question is more fully answered in the messages themselves, but for now we'll refer back to the fact that Padgett was asked to spiritually prepare himself, through earnest, prolonged prayer, prior to receiving these communications. Padgett's Christian upbringing had, to some extent, already started him in this direction, and no doubt made it easier for him to understand and follow these instructions when they were given him. His familiarity with the Bible of course also made it easier for him to articulate information about its teachings.

Relevant to this question, it's important to understand that Padgett was not unconscious during the reception of these messages. The spirits never took full control of Padgett's mind or body (which, as they explained, would have constituted a transgression of his free will), but rather worked with and through his fully conscious mind as they wrote. The spirit-authors, then, were constantly interacting with Padgett's own personality-his beliefs, attitudes, state of mind, and spiritual condition-while writing. The resulting influence of the mortal medium on the writings is sometimes obvious-as in the fact that the spirits could only use words in Padgett's vocabulary- and other times more subtle, manifesting itself as a flavoring or tone. Because of this ongoing influence and interaction, it may be helpful to consider Padgett as something of a "collaborator" in the creation of these writings, rather than a mere dictation-taker.

Padgett frequently asked questions of the spirit-authors as they wrote, although his trance state evidently prevented him from writing the questions down. We sometimes note the instance of a question, but leave the actual query to your imagination.

As another point of incredulity, some might ask: Why would Jesus have chosen such a seemingly inefficient and error-prone method of communication to deliver his corrected teachings to humanity? From the accounts in the New Testament, one would think that Jesus could simply have come in physical form and written the book himself (or better yet, just waited a few years for the advent of live television...). The answer to this question (provided by Jesus himself) carries with it some larger implications.

We can imagine that there are countless things that Jesus could or would have done in the last 2000 years to help humankind, if not for one central fact of human existence: God's absolute and unyielding respect for the free will of His children. How many things could or would God do, to alleviate human suffering and ignorance, if not for this one restriction that He has placed upon Himself? And if God so honors our wills, so of course do all who abide by His will.

Because of our free will, humankind's desire, consent, and participation will always be necessary components in any divine revelation of truth. We (both individually and collectively) must desire truth before we can receive it; and the strength and sincerity of our desire will determine the amount and purity of truth that we receive. As Jesus succinctly states in the Bible: "Ask, and you shall receive..."

We're given to understand, then, that Jesus never "went away" after his death; he's been here in our midst, ready and willing to communicate with anyone who was in condition to hear him, for the last 20 centuries. The limiting factor in these communications has not rested with Jesus; it's been in the strength of our individual and collective desire to know the truth. And it was humankind's hunger for truth that set the stage and finally enabled Jesus to deliver these messages through James Padgett.

You'll understand, then, that we don't consider the Padgett messages to be the "final word" regarding the true teachings of Jesus. Rather we see them as perhaps the "first word" of a new chapter of our understanding of his teachings. We look forward to an era when spirit communication is acknowledged and regularly utilized as an invaluable (and God-given) source of knowledge and wisdom for mortal humankind.

A word about the editing of this book. The unedited transcripts of these messages read very much like "first drafts"-generally understandable, but definitely not an "easy read." We've taken considerable license, then, in our attempt to make this presentation clear, consistent, and accessible for the modern reader. Selecting two hundred messages from among the twenty-five hundred that Padgett received, we corrected for errors in grammar, trimmed extraneous words, and updated archaic language. We also corrected for occasional conceptual errors and inconsistencies, aided in some instances by information delivered through subsequent mediums. (Having no illusions about the infallibility of our editorial decisions, we're comforted to know that verbatim transcripts of the messages are archived on the internet). At the same time, we strove to retain the distinctive qualities and nuances

of the original writings, by which the reader can at times even discern the unique personalities of the various spirit-authors.

As part of our strategy to preserve these original flavorings, we elected to retain the archaic gender-specific language which pervades these writings. In our defense, we realize that, even today, accurate genderless replacements for the words man and men (as they're used in these messages) simply don't exist in the English language. In many instances, the accurate replacement for men in these messages would be the unwieldy "all members of humankind, considered as individuals." In the interest of brevity, then, we ask the reader to attach to these words their all-important and intended meaning, which is, quite simply, you.

In the same way, the continual references to God as Father may need to be internally translated by the reader. The term Abba had great significance when used by Jesus-emphasizing a personal and intimate relationship with our Creator, in contrast to the impersonal Lord or Hashem ("The Name") of Old Testament times. To have replaced the word Father even with Parent would have slightly diluted its meaning; but since we understand that God is neither a man nor a woman, we think that Heavenly Mother would be every bit as accurate (and inaccurate) a way to refer to God.

And finally, please feel free to interpret all the words of encouragement directed to Padgett as being spoken directly to you. A primary purpose of these writings is to affirm that each of God's children is precious to Him, and thus that no middleman is needed or required to talk with Him (or with His ministering angels). These messages powerfully affirm that we each possess the capacity to commune with God and His angels, and to learn and discern spiritual truth for ourselves.

Follow the links below to some of the many pages and sites about this....

[A quick summary of the teachings
Dr. Stone's "Testimony"
The Padgett messages](#)

<http://www.Foundation Church of the New Birth.org/>