

A Baptist preacher and his wife decided they needed a dog. Ever mindful of the congregation, they knew the dog must also be Baptist. They visited an expensive kennel and explained their needs to the manager, who assured them he had just the dog for them. The dog was produced and the manager said "Fetch the Bible." The dog bounded to the bookshelf, scrutinized the books, located the Bible, and brought it to the manager. The manager then said "Find Psalms 23". The dog, showing marvelous dexterity with his paws, leafed through the Bible, found the correct passage, and pointed to it with his paw. Duly impressed, the couple purchased the dog. That evening some church members came to visit. The preacher and his wife began to show off the dog, having him locate several Bible verses. The visitors were amazed. Finally, one man asked "Can he do normal dog tricks too?" "Let's see" said the preacher. Pointing his finger at the dog, he commanded "Heel!" The dog immediately jumped up on a chair, placed one paw on the preacher's forehead and began to howl. The preacher turned to his wife and exclaimed "Good grief, we've bought a Pentecostal dog!"

A Catholic, a Baptist, and a United Methodist all die and go to heaven. St. Peter comes around to the Pearly Gates and leads them through to a hallway lined with doors. These, he explains, lead to the place you'll spend eternity in.

He asks the Catholic, "What denomination were you?"

"Roman Catholic."

St. Peter points to a heavily carved dark wooden door and says, "Step in there." The Catholic opens it up to find a chapel lined with stained-glass windows and candles. He gasps with delight— "A church!"— runs inside, kneels and starts counting his rosary.

St. Peter turns to the Baptist and gets his denomination, then points to another door. The Baptist opens it to find a canvas tent filled with people singing and waving their arms to a swaying choir and a shouting pastor. "A revival meeting!" He runs and joins the crowd.

Finally St. Peter asks the United Methodist, "And what were you?"

"United Methodist."

Peter leads him to another door and pulls it open. Inside is a big round table with people seated around shuffling papers and arguing. The *Methodist* claps his hands to his face in happiness.

"A committee!"

This world is full of remedies. But you have no remedy until God opens a window for you. You may not be aware of that remedy just now. In the hour of need it will be made clear to you. The Prophet said God made a remedy for every pain.

-Rumi, "Mathnawi"

As God has made the Qibla manifest, abandon your search. Hark, turn away from all futile search, now that the House has come to view. If you forget this Qibla for one moment, you will be overcome by the qibla of desires.

-Rumi, "Mathnawi"

Give your life for that cup of divine wisdom. How can you succeed without endurance and patience? To wait for the sake of that cup is no hardship. Show patience. For patience is the key to joy.

-Rumi, "Mathnawi"

The falcon made the king's hand his joy, and because indifferent to the search for carrion. All animals from the gnat to the elephant are of the family of God and depend on Him for sustenance. What a sustainer is God!

-Rumi, "Mathnawi"

Water said to the defiled, "Hurry come to me."

The defiled replied, "But I feel ashamed before the water."

Water said, "But without me how will you wash your shame? How will your filth be removed?"

Shame hinders the faith of the tainted who hide from the water.

-Rumi, "Mathnawi"

The servile earth and the lofty sky:
without this opposite
the sky would not be so high.
The low and high of the earth
are winter and spring.
The low and high of time
are night and day.
The low and high of the body
are sickness and health.
By means of these opposites
the world is kept alive;
by means of these doubles
souls feel fear and hope.

-Rumi, "Mathnawi"

Bitter is made sweet through love;
copper becomes gold through love.
Through love dregs become clear;
love heals all pain.
Through love the king becomes slave;
love brings the dead to life.

-Rumi, "Mathnawi"

You see throngs of afflicted feeble folk seated at the door in ardent hope. O you who are crushed, your pleas have been heard. Hark! Rush toward the mercy of God and be delivered of pain.

-Rumi, "Mathnawi"

Translated by Aneela Khalid Arshad. Copyright 1999. All rights reserved. Used with permission of The Crossroad Publishing Company, New York.