



Rare Lectures

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CONCENTRATION

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My Dear Beloved Ones, I am glad to see you all again. I thank you very much for the opportunity of serving you. I have never been happier than in the act of serving and in sharing my spirituality with all of you. Indeed, the real joy consists only in giving but never in accumulation nor in confining knowledge to one's individual use. The more we give, the more we get. So I request you to share with me all that I have.

Dear Ones, our present subject is concentration so I request you all to listen to the subject with concentration. Indeed, concentration is needed for one and all. If I am speaking concentration is needed for me, to stay in one line of thought on the same subject. For you also, to follow and understand the subject clearly, you require concentration. Otherwise, you will not be able to understand it completely. Keeping your bodies here, having your eyes on me, if you give your minds to think of your home affairs or other affairs of life, your coming will be a waste of time. So I request not only your physical attention, but your mental attention also. Otherwise our life will be just like the one who had attended church but who had missed the effects of the service or the benefit of going to the church.

In this connection I beg you to allow me to illustrate a little story of two boys to make you understand the necessity of keeping our minds on the goal of our life, even though our bodies will be placed in different conditions or environments.

Now our two boys were great friends. Once they were spending a day together and one of them asked the other boy to go with him to the church to attend the beautiful service and thus to feel the oneness of the Almighty Lord. Then the other one replied, "Oh what is there in going to the church? It will just be dull and nothing but the repetition of the same things. I would rather play baseball in the park." Thus one went to the church and the other one went to the game of baseball.

The one that went to play baseball, began to repent not having gone to the church with his friend. Thus instead of playing ball, he sat in one corner and began to think of the church, the Holy communion, the singing and the sermons, etc. Thus he dwelt on holy thoughts of God. The other one went to church. He occupied the front seat and with his whole mind began to think about his friend and his baseball.

He began to think, saying, "Oh what a mistake I made in coming here. Nothing is interesting. My friend must be deeply engaged in playing baseball with the other jolly companions there." Thus he was thinking of the baseball game, concentrating all his energies on it.

In the night, both of our friends met each other again. The boy who went to church said unto the other one, "John! I am awfully sorry I missed enjoying your baseball game with you. I wasted my time in the church." And the other one, who was sitting meditating on the services of the church said, "Oh Harry, I felt sorry for not going to church and thus made myself miserable in the game."

The story goes on to say that the one who was in the park playing the game of baseball, got the effects or benefits of attending the church. This is just because of the concentration of his mind, even though his body was not in the church. Whereas the one who went to the church though his body was in the church, he got the effect of the play just because he gave his mind to it!

Thus dear friends you see, we do not live where our bodies are! We live where our minds are. The mind is the important thing in determining the goal of our life. Concentration follows in the footsteps of the mind, rather than following the physical body. So I repeatedly request you to concentrate all your energies of the mind on the subject you are going to hear.

Do not think that I am wasting your time with unnecessary introduction, without commencing the subject. It has been my habit always to understand the subject practically before proceeding with it. When we do not know what we are hearing or going to hear, it does not help us in our future advancement.

So in the first place let us understand why we have come here and what we are going to listen to. Then we are to understand what we are and what is concentration. We have to then understand in what way we are connected with the same and whether this concentration is going to help us in every way.

When we understand a subject is an indispensable necessity, then we will pay more attention to grasp and assimilate it. As I have said already, concentration is needed by one and all of us. It need not be confined to spiritual life. It is needed as much in the life of the world also. Let it be in any line, no one can succeed without concentration.

A business man needs concentration as much as a spiritual man. A student needs concentration as much as a professor. Strange as it may seem, even in cooking and eating, concentration is needed. If one pays no attention to what he or she is cooking, it will be fried too much and it will be unfit to eat. One who eats with concentration will be a picture of perfect health.

A boy without has no concentration will not be able to understand his lessons even though he reads twenty times. Whereas one who has concentration can know his lessons by reading once. With concentration every work will be done perfectly and without the least drudgery.

Dear friends, strange as it may appear, there is concentration even in a robber, when breaking into a house successfully. There is concentration to a certain extent even in a heinous criminal or the so-called sinner, when he is committing a wicked deed with all the force or energy of life. Indeed the energy is the same but it is misdirected.

There is a penknife. One can use it in sharpening pencils, or in cutting fruits, etc. However, with the same penknife one can cut the throats of others or oneself. So also there is the power of concentration in everyone of us. We are rewarded in the way we see it. If we develop it in the use of the lower life, it takes the same plane. If we develop it in the plane of the higher life, it takes us to God. If we develop it in the plane of the world, it makes us better men of the world, in the sense of the world.

So everyone must develop concentration consciously for realising God, for worship of God and thus in realising the goal of human birth. It should not be used for gaining the temporary things of the world and for worship of mammon.

Dear beloved ones, to what do you think all these wonderful discoveries and great inventions are due? To nothing but simple concentration alone! What is it that makes a poet inspired? It is nothing but concentration. What is it that makes an artist produce a masterpiece in painting? It is nothing but the power of concentration alone.

What is it that has made our simple Jesus a living Christ? It is nothing but concentration alone, in the Higher paths. What is it that has made the Gautama the Great Buddha, the Master of Nirvana? It is nothing but the simple concentration alone. What is it that has made Krishna an incarnation of God? It is nothing but the ordinary concentration alone. It is manifesting in one and all of us irrespective of castes, creed, colour and nationality.

Now it is in our power to become a Buddha or the tempter Mara. It is in our power to become the Krishna the Divinity or Kamsa, the demon.

There is the energy. Do as you please. Manifest it as you like. If you use it in the right way, in the proper channels, peace will be the result. If you misuse it in the wrong way, misery and agony will be the result. What we sow, we are to reap. No one will be allowed to reap our own Karmas or actions.

So dear beloved ones, beware in what way you are going to use and develop your powers of concentration. The law is law for one and all! We cannot violate it. All must bend their knees before this great law in all homage. Om!

Dear devoted Ones, again begging your pardon for my long introduction, let me begin my subject without beating about the bush any further in a roundabout way.

What is concentration? Shall we call it steadiness of mind, or allowing the mind to flow in one direction? Concentration is the direction or the incessant flow of the inner energy in one channel. Focusing of the mind in one direction with one aim is concentration. Concentration is the manifestation of the developed will. In the books of the East a simple illustration has been given to make us understand concentration clearly. Suppose you pour oil from one big can or tub into another can or tub. Will there be a break in the flow while you pour it from one tub into the other? It flows in one unceasing current. So also concentration is said to be steady when it flows like oil from one vessel into another vessel, in an unceasing current.

Everyone that has concentration will make his life a complete success in whatever life it may be. Then, those that lack concentration or steadiness, will make themselves miserable wrecks and failures. Hence concentration is needed for one and all.

Indeed this concentration has a story or history of its own. Now let us go earnestly and deeply into its study or history. From one standpoint, concentration is not the beginning of spiritual life, neither can it be the end. For before thinking of concentration we are to think of many preliminary steps. Without going through these preliminary steps, we have no right even to think of concentration. However anxious we may be, we are to prepare ourselves to be fully worthy of treading in the path of concentration.

When we want to give a dinner party to our friends, we cannot give it to them immediately. Before we invite them, we have to get all kinds of foodstuffs from the store and make the food ready. We have to set the tables in order, and then alone we can invite our guests to partake of the meal.

In the same way if you pass through the preliminary stages, you will be able to realise the greatness of concentration practically in your own life in a conscious manner. If not, it will be like inviting all guests, having nothing to give them. Thus you will make yourself a fool. So also, if there is not that firm foundation of concentration in you, you will never encounter Peace, but only misery and restlessness.

We are taught in the Hindu religion that one will be able to realise God or to reach the goal of life by following the eight steps of Yoga. It is called *Ashtanga Yoga* in Sanskrit. That means *Eight steps for realisation*. According to this, we see that our present subject is neither the beginning nor the middle. It comes as the sixth step. After passing through the five stages he naturally takes up the sixth step, namely, concentration.

Now let us see what are these five elementary steps. Pray, do not say, "*Why do you bother us with all these unnecessary steps?*" Don't you want concentration? How can you go to the sixth stage without knowing the five stages? For ascending the staircase, do you want to jump to the sixth step without passing or stepping on each one after another? Some may say, "Oh we can jump." But there is the possibility of breaking your legs. Why follow the unnatural way, instead of following naturally one step after another?

For instance if I place our Atma Ram in the class of graduates, will it help him in any way? Will he be able to understand anything? Such an unusual or unnatural course would rather harm him instead of helping him in anyway. If he wants to be a graduate, he must pass through all the lower grades. Is there any other way? No, there is no other way.

Sometimes we see boys failing in their examinations. What can be the reason? The simple cause is they are not efficient in the preliminary grades. They are poor in the previous grades. If the

are efficient in every grade, then they will never fail in any future grades. Hence make the foundation firm and steady before you think of constructing the house.

What can be the cause of people everywhere complaining of their unsteadiness in concentration? Someone was saying to me the other day, "Oh, my mind wanders a million times." No doubt, it is no wonder when one is not standing on a firm basis. Not passing through the preliminary stages of life, it fails not to wander many more millions of times. How foolish it is to complain of the unsteadiness, violating the laws of gradual growth of life grossly.

Everyone is responsible for his or her own weaknesses and wanderings of the mind. The cause is not outside. It is not far to seek. It is only within, in our own imperfections. If each one can know the root cause of the mistake, there is every possibility of rectifying it. We should not throw our faults on others. We should never attribute our weaknesses to outside persons or powers. We alone are the cause for our steadiness or unsteadiness.

As no one is free from these wanderings of the mind or its fickleness in some form or the other, let us try to understand fully in all details, beginning from the first step to the last. Then alone we will have every right to understand the greatness and glory of concentration. Thus our very life will have a different aspect and life will seem worth living. Then one says, "After all concentration is not so hard." It appears then as easy as any other thing, for he has rightly passed through the preliminary states or laws of life.

Now the steps as I have said are eight in number: they are called in Sanskrit: *Yama* (means right living), *Niyama* (means regular habits in life), *Asana* (a steady posture), *Pranayama* (rhythmical breath), *Pratyahara* (drawing the sense within from outward objects), *Dharana* (concentration), *Dhyana* (contemplation), and *Samadhi* (Nirvana or Super-consciousness).

These are the eight steps that take anyone to the Highest consciousness. As I have not explained to you in full detail, these may appear as meaningless. So let us take each step separately and try to understand it in as many details as possible. Then you will not fail to realise the greatness of importance of these steps.

In other words these steps are no other than the Ten Commandments of the Christian Bible. What do you think of a man who is trying to reach the Heavenly Father, violating the commandments? One who thinks of raising the roof for a house without foundations or walls must be a lunatic. So it is nothing but mere waste of energy and time to think of concentration without passing through these preliminary steps which are the basis and stepping stones for the spiritual life.

The first step consists of truthfulness, non-killing, non-stealing, celibacy and non-receiving of gifts from others. Verily we must be truthful in thought, word and deed. We should never kill or do harm to any living creature on the earth. We should instead love all forms as the manifestation of God. We should never steal or even wish for the property of others. By running after or receiving goods we will be making ourselves beggars. We must be always in the position of givers but never as beggars.

The second step consists of austerity, worship, study, purity, contentment and so on. Unless we pay the price we can never realise our cherished objects. So in a regular and earnest manner, one should realise truth, being filled with purity.

The third step is posture. To make one's mind calm and steady a certain kind of suitable and comfortable posture is needed. Unless there is steadiness in body one is never expected to make progress in concentration. When one is conscious all the while about his physical body, moving continuously how can he be expected to concentrate or to make himself peaceful? Then the mind will be more and more restless. If one can make the body steady, it will be easy for such a one to make the mind steady.

So through the physical conquest, one should try to control the mental state. Each one can choose a comfortable posture, wherein he can remain for a long time steadily. Every day one should stick to the same posture alone. A steady posture is quite essential to make progress in concentration.

We have never heard of anyone practising concentration while running or in other such pursuits. The best posture for everyone is the one where he can remain for a long time rising above the body.

When practising concentration one should keep in mind never to sit in a crooked or bending way. The main thing to note is the spinal cord. The neck and head should be erect in a straight line. Someone has said that our thoughts will be crooked if we sit in a crooked way and straight and noble if we practice to sit in a straight way. So try to sit in a straight and erect manner, not only when you practice concentration but also at other times.

The next step is regular breathing. This is called *Pranayama* or the control of vital breath. Some of you may say, 'What has breathing to do with our mind or concentration?' A steady and rhythmical breathing helps a great deal in the control of the mind. Breath and mind cannot be separated. There is a close relationship between them.

You may have noticed when a man is very angry or disturbed by other conditions of life, how unsteadily and forcibly he breathes. Hence even others will be able to hear his breathing. Again take another man, who is calm and collected, say is meditating of God. He is so deeply absorbed or merged within, we will be hardly able to know whether he is breathing or not.

Thus we see that regular breathing makes one calm and steady. It makes one also strong and healthy physically. Even though you will not take any course on breathing, at least it will be helpful to you if you try to keep your breath calm and even, by practising always to breathe rhythmically.

The fifth step is *Pratyahara* or drawing the senses inward from the outer life. You should not allow your senses to run after the objects of the world, from one thing to another. Regarding this step, in the books of the East the illustration of a tortoise is given. It draws its organs within itself whenever it desires to do so. So also, one who is aspiring for spiritual life must act like a tortoise when placed in the daily duties of life.

When the Kingdom of Heaven is within, are we not to search for it within, making a retreat from these outer searches? How long are we to waste our precious life and energy in search of the finite things of name and form? If we could only spend a part of this energy in searching for the Truth within us, we would have been seated in the Kingdom of Heaven itself by this time. Our very common sense tells us that it is futile and a waste of time to wish to concentrate and realise God, while allowing our minds unceasingly to run after the shadows of the momentary life.

If one has fulfilled these five stages, then he will be a fit man to tread on the path of concentration. Real concentration begins only here, but not until then. So after faithfully passing through these five steps, we are given the sixth step, namely, *Dharana* or concentration. Here one will have just a glimpse of concentration with the searchlight of his mind.

The seventh step is *Dhyana* or contemplation. Here he focuses his mind like a searchlight continuously and thus rises to the last stage called *Samadhi* or meditation, where he rises even above the idea of meditation. There he will be nothing but floods of light, merging in the Great State of super-consciousness as One without a second. We need not dwell any further here about these higher states of meditation, as our present subject is only on concentration.

One who has not passed through the five elementary states should never think of getting concentration. And one who is not perfect in concentration need not waste his time in thinking of the next two Higher states. Everything is to be done regularly and systematically. The path is simple and direct. So one should try to walk in it in the most natural way, realising step after step gradually.

Now you may say, "If we have passed through these five stages which are indispensable to everyone, what are we to do? How are we to concentrate and on what object are we to concentrate?" Indeed as we have come so far, all that we need to know now is only the practical side of concentration.

If you can remember in our last lecture on '*Divinity of Man*', I was telling to you that the Divinity alone is the only Reality and that you are never separate from Divinity. So we are to meditate on the only Reality, which is a part and parcel of our lives. But how can we meditate on the Divinity which is formless and nameless? If it has a name we can think of it. If it has a form we can concentrate on it. The objects that have names and forms are perishable sooner or later, hence they can never give us peace. But on the contrary we will be filled with misery and unrest by concentrating on changing objects.

So whether it is easy or difficult, for the final peace we are to concentrate only on the changeless truth, our living birthright. On whatever things we think and meditate, by the laws of attraction we will be forced to reach them. Those who are working for the Kingdom of Heaven within, they are realising the same and those who are working for the Kingdom of Satan, they too are realising the same. Thought is another word for fate. As we wish, we will get. As we sow, we will be made to reap.

We find in the Gita, Krishna saying, "The worshippers of ancestors (Pitris), will go to ancestors. The worshippers of devils (Bhutas), will go to devils. The worshippers of Angels (devatas) will go to Angels and all worshippers of mine, will come and merge in Me." So everyone is getting his own share according to his own desire.

In the same Gita we are told that it is very difficult to realise Him through the path of the unmanifested and very easy to walk in the path of the manifested. So one should try to realise the unmanifested through the manifested. One should try to reach God the formless and nameless through the manifested alone. This is called in the sacred books of India by the name of *Saguna* and *Nirguna* worship.

The first state is to worship God with attributes of name and form. Here one's mind will be steady and concentrated to a certain extent. Then, he will be fit to take the next state of worshipping God in His unmanifested state without any attribute of form or name. As already repeated by me, one should walk gradually, realising one stage after another.

Even if we are going to begin the elementary states of concentration, you may ask, "How to concentrate and how to begin?" What is the best method of concentration in this stage? It is rather a hard and vague question to be answered in a definite way. For, there are thousands of methods for concentration! One method may not be suitable for another. One man's medicine may be poison for another man.

I too, can give and describe to you not one or two but hundreds of ways for concentration. Yet what good will it do for you? It will confuse your minds more and more. When a patient comes to the doctor, what is the duty of the doctor? Is he to describe and give all his medicines to the patient? It will rather make the case worse! If the doctor is a sensible man, before even speaking about his medicines, he should inquire into the case of his patient and must analyse and diagnose the symptoms. Then only he should give the proper and right kind of medicine for that particular disease.

In the same way, in the spiritual path also, if the teacher is wise, he should see what the ambitions of his pupils are. He should see where they are standing and how far they have walked on this path. Then he can say what kind of practise will be helpful to them. Thus seeing their present stage, one should give further help. Such instructions alone will be useful and helpful. Otherwise, all the grand eloquent talks and lectures and the various methods of concentrations will be forgotten as soon as they are uttered.

So those who are not prepared to practise sincerely any methods of concentration for realising God, should not be hasty in practising every method they are listening from every teacher. By practical experience alone, every one can see for himself or herself how they have taken up one method after another and how they are still standing in the same boat. They can see how they are being tossed hither and thither, by the angry waves of the mental ocean.

A patient who is suffering terribly from a disease, no longer wanders hither and thither wasting his time and allowing the disease to increase. Instead he seeks a good doctor. He explains all the symptoms of his case and thus gets himself cured by remaining under the treatment of that doctor. In the same way you too, or at least those who are anxious for realising God in this birth, must waste no more time by running hither and thither. They should seek a Holy man, who has realised God and who is living for the sake of others, rising above all desires of every kind.

When the teacher cannot live in his own life the truths of what he is teaching, then it will be a waste of time both for himself and for his pupils. Like any other branches of knowledge, this spiritual knowledge cannot be had or learned from men of surface lives. One cannot teach us from books or with his theoretical knowledge.

So you should seek such a teacher who is living the life of what he is teaching. If you are Blessed to sit at the feet of such a Great Soul, you will not fail to realise the goal of life. You will be adding each hour for your eternal life. Many may say, 'Where can we get such a practical soul?' If you are only earnest and sincere you will not fail to get him. For when the pupil is ready, the Masters fails not to appear. Every innocent desire will be surely fulfilled.

Some of you may be feeling disappointed in our present lecture since I am not giving any special methods or concentration. I have all love and respect for all of you. When each one of you are different in temperament and in life, without knowing where you are, how can I give you any particular method for realising God?

As you know, the whole world can be classified into four groups of people. Each group has a particular temperament. The first class of people belong to the active life. Their temperament is full of activity. The second class of people belong to the devotional life. Their temperament is full of devotion. The third class of people belong to the reasoning or scientific nature. Their temperament is full of reasoning. They are always analysing and sometimes doubting also. They accept or believe in nothing except on practical perception. Then there are the fourth class of people belonging to the meditative temperament, facing God within and without and all around them.

Thus a wise teacher should give instructions knowing the particular temperament of the individual. If not, it will be nothing but a mere waste of precious life and energy. For instance, if we teach the man of action or devotion to make the mind waveless, he thinks that we are teaching the shortest path to lunacy or perdition. Sometimes it leads there also, for the instructions are quite opposite or not congenial to those special temperaments.

Then, if we ask a man belonging to the reasoning temperament to meditate on Christ or Buddha, he takes us for fanatics. Such a method will be useful only for a man who is walking in the path of devotion. Same is the case with the other classes of temperaments.

Here I am reminded of an instructive story of a disciple. It describes how he could not realise God through the path of the unmanifested. Then it shows how he realised Him through the object he loved most. It seems once a Master instructed a disciple into the Higher mysteries of Truth. Although the disciple practised for months and years, he could not derive any benefit from it. His mind began to be more and more restless.

Then the Master asked him, "What is the matter with you my dear child, why are you so unsteady and restless?" The disciple replied, "Oh Blessed Master, I am not able to realise your teachings for they are beyond my comprehension." Then the Master asked what his constant thoughts were. He replied, "Oh Master, pardon my ignorance if I confess to you I have a she buffalo. All my life I have taken care of it. I have no other desire than to feed and nourish it, as it gives me milk for my food."

The story goes on to say that the Master initiated him in some other way from the devotional aspect and asked the pupil to see his ideal in the buffalo alone, when doing concentration. When he is

concentrating on the object to which his mind used to wander, where can it go now? So he began to be calm and steady.

After a few days the Master called him by his name when he was in his daily practise, with the desire of examining him. At first the disciple did not hear him, as he was so deeply merged. However, when repeatedly called and disturbed he replied, "Oh Master, how can I come, the horns of the buffalo are in front of me!" The Master saw that his pupil had reached a certain state of concentration. Therefore, he began to initiate him into the Higher state. Thus finally the disciple realised the goal.

So Dear Friends, from this illustration we see that even through a buffalo one can make his mind steady and realise God. By this I do not mean to ask you all to meditate on a she buffalo! What I mean is, if the Master is a practical and competent soul, he will see that his pupils will realise God through the very obstacles that are standing in their way, for their higher development. Each and every stumbling block which is coming on our way, can be made a stepping stone for our onward life. If one only knew this!

So, before giving instructions in concentration it is quite essential that the teacher should know the temperament and the present state of development of his pupils. In concentration for every temperament, the objects that are to be meditated on, again are classified into three headings. One is the gross objects, second, fine and the third, subtle. The teacher should take his pupils of all temperaments from the gross to the fine and from the fine to the subtle, the Highest state of Realisation.

In short, as a loving mother silently, continuously and untiringly nourishes and takes care of her tender babe, so also a real teacher should take the same care of his pupil. He should be ever watching and helping him unceasingly. It should only be for the sake of love, never seeking any reward. If the Blessed Master cannot practice to serve and guide others, never caring for the results or rewards, how much less can the pupils practice!

So, a practical and ideal life is needed both for the teacher and disciple. Then alone the instructions or initiations will bear the proper fruit. This is a path that cannot be realised by intelligence or by powers or by force. It can only be realised by love, innocence and self-denial.

Some people think that concentration will affect them and they will degenerate. That very thought is degenerating! It may be true that misdirected and wrong concentration that is practised with full of desires may degenerate them. However, real concentration is all strength and life. Even though one will not make any progress consciously by leaps and bounds, it is a fact that one who is walking in the true path of concentration will never fall down or be affected with lower influences. Before the strong will of a man of concentration, everything will be revealed and all nature pays homage to one who is perfected in the Highest states of concentration. So every thought that it may harm, is nothing but ignorance and meaningless.

Nothing can be done by mere words. Everything can be fulfilled only by practice. In every line and in every method of concentration, practise alone makes one perfect. Whatever our method of concentration may be, the mind will be fickle and wandering in the beginning. If the mind is steady and controlled there is no need of any of these practises in concentration. They are only to make our minds calm, steady and controlled. Otherwise, there is no need of any of these practices in concentration.

It is only to make our minds calm and steady we are to do all kinds of concentrations and meditations. Each time the mind goes from the object of our concentration, our bounded duty must be to bring it back from its wanderings and make it concentrate again on our object of concentration. If it goes again, the same thing should be done immediately.

No one need be discouraged by this fickleness. If the mind wanders a thousand times from the object of concentration, it should be brought back a thousand times, not even one time less. The main thing one has to remember in that the mind should be brought back immediately, without any further

delay. If we make delay in controlling it in its initial stages, the mind becomes stronger and stronger with the contact of its imagination, then it will be a difficult thing to control it.

Those without are practising concentration should be ever watching the mind. The moment it goes outward, on that very moment they should bounce on it and make it merge without. For the control of the mind in the Gita and other great books of authority on this subject, only two ways are given. One way is the constant practice in making it steady over and over again, bringing it back from its wanderings. And the other way is discrimination and non-attachment.

It is only lack of discrimination or non-attachment that makes one's mind wander hither and thither. When one is perfectly non-attached toward the momentary things of the world, where will the mind go? Because of the various attachments, desires and ambitions in the life of the senses, the mind takes pleasure in continuously running after them. Thus it is ever grovelling in darkness. So one should always be standing on the firm rock of non-attachment.

In spite of non-attachment, on account of the past impressions and habits, the mind might be going out. In that case one should begin to practice to bring it back. The more it goes, the more one should control it. Every time one should teach the mind that it is unnecessarily running after objects. These objects are ever changing. They give only pain and misery in the long run.

One is forgetting the great joy and peace that is within. Indeed it is nothing but weakness and childishness to run after poison, knowing that it is poison. Meanwhile, one is neglecting the Divine Nectar of Immortality which eternally within. Thus by non-attachment and unceasing practise the most unruly and turbulent minds can be made calm.

Thus a time will come, gradually, when even the very restless mind becomes more and more calm. At a certain stage, it will not wander at all. Verily in every concentration the student should aim only at the control of the mind. Whether you have received instructions from this teacher or from that Master, it is immaterial if you can control your minds. All instructions, all teachings, all initiations and even all religions are centred only around the mind.

Nothing can be done without controlling the fickle mind. Indeed nature is fickle and restless. However, by untiring and resolute practice it can be made as calm as the waveless sea. As everything is in strenuous practice alone, one should try and try ceaselessly until he succeeds.

If you can succeed in making your mind steady, be it even for a single second today, tomorrow you will be happy to note that you can be steady for two seconds. Thus every day, for each and every sitting, you should strive to make some more progress. Unless you make some fresh progress you should not rise from your practice. Often and often you should determine never to fail down but to go on and on making further progress. If you follow this little piece of advice practically, you will be astonished to see for yourself, in a few days alone, your mind will be steady not only for a few seconds or minutes, but even for hours.

I am afraid many of you will be feeling disappointed in me for not giving you any particular or special methods for doing concentration. As I have already told you, unless I know the temperament and the individual stage of the student I cannot give any definite methods that can be practically beneficial to you. By that I am not trying to hide or to keep away all that I know from imparting to any of you. I am always at your service. Any one of you can come to see me at any time. I shall be only too happy to be serviceable unto you, after knowing your present state of development. I have no greater joy in this life other than to serve all sincere seekers after Truth.

For the present I would advise and suggest that you do not run after any unnatural or unusual practices. Practice in the most natural way according to your own liking and taste. Trying to close the eardrums and exerting to hear this sound and that sound, or straining one's eyes or even trying to see lightnings and flashes, or symbols or visions, are all unnatural practices. Engage only in such practices that are natural, reasonable and logical.

Always try to walk in the footsteps of great souls like Buddha, Christ and other Saviours of Humanity. Remember how naturally they lived their simple lives, ever filled with Universal Love. Let your goal and ideal always be Truth.

My Dear Brothers and Sisters, I am coming to the end of our present subject, just touching on one more point which may be useful and helpful if you practice it in your lives. Will you not believe me if I say that there is more joy in concentration when we can practice it in each and every act and duty of life, than in the concentrations that are confined and fixed to a certain hour and place. I am not discouraging you in doing concentration in regular hours. By all means it is essential and you should do it regularly. Yet what I say is the truth. There is greater joy if you can do every work as an act of dedication with a concentrated mind.

The other day a sister said to me that she would tie her shoe laces with concentration. I felt joy to note that she was doing concentration even when engaged in such a trifling work. Oh, if one can only learn to do every work with concentration, the very work becomes worship! Thus alone our regular hours of concentration also will be steady and collected.

If we are writing, we must become one with the writing. If we are reading, we must become one with the reading. If we are working, we must become one with the work. In all the duties and actions we must rise above the little 'I' and forget ourselves in our works. Then every work becomes sacred, and dedicated to the feet of the Almighty.

So my dear Friends, my last request to all of you is, practice steadiness and concentration. Don't only do it in your silent periods of life, but also in your daily duties, such as cooking, eating, walking, talking, writing and so on. Thus every act in your lives will be offered unto God and your very life will be a concentration unto the all-pervading God.

May you be filled in every second of your life with peace and may each and every act and thought take you into the glories of the Godhead!

MAY PEACE BE UNTO ALL! OM TAT SATI

DIVINITY OF MAN

30 September 1925, Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Blessed Ones! It gives me great joy to see you all here tonight. It will be a real privilege to me if I can be serviceable unto you practically, instead of spending my time in talking of something unnecessary and thus whiling away both your time and my time. It has been my nature from my boyhood never to speak unless I help someone in some way. I speak only when I can be helpful and serviceable unto you. So, I hope my present talk will be helpful and serviceable unto all of you.

Before beginning our subject I desire to invoke the Blessings of the Almighty so that all of us may be filled with Divinity. '*Love and be loved in return*' is a simple and noble precept. When I love you all as my own, you cannot help but love me as your own self. Wherever there is love, everything becomes smooth and easy. Then we will be able to understand each other perfectly. So dear ones, allow me to love you as I love this particular body, and may you love me also as your own brother. Because of this love I will be able to speak to your inner hearts and you will be able to understand every word of mine because we are all one.

Verily love is never separate nor is it two. Real love, changeless love, universal love, has been eternally One, whether in past, present or future. It is in this great love that we are living, moving and having our being. May our present talk help us more and more to grow and develop in this love. Now let us begin the subject feeling the Spirit of this Divine Love with every heart-beat and with every breath.

Our present subject has been the theme and basis of all religions in all nations, both in the past and present. This is the subject that is concerned with our every day life and not with the hereafter. This is not a subject for speculation but this is a subject of our ideal life. We must speak always on such subjects that find us strength, vitality and peace and with which we are concerned in every moment of our lives.

Is there anyone among you that can say, "I can live without Divinity"? Is there even one among you that can say boldly, "I do not want Divinity"? Thus this is an ideal subject which is the basis and principle of our lives. Indeed this is a subject needed for both the rich and the poor, high and low, young and old, beginning from the lowest sinner to the greatest saint.

When I say "Divinity of Man" I do not want to be misunderstood by any of my sisters as if I am confining Divinity to men alone. Indeed there are not people wanting, who confine the Truth to some special class of men. They give special privileges calling them the chosen people of God in the various walks of life. However, as far as Divinity is concerned it is not the special privilege of man alone. It is the birthright of women as much as it is of man. I simply use the term *Divinity of Man* for the sake of convenience alone. As such, this Divinity refers to women as much as it does to man.

In short, the Divinity of man refers to the human kingdom, as it represents the human kingdom. If we go a step deeper into the Divinity, I feel we have no right even to confine the Divinity to the human kingdom. Is not Divinity existing in other kingdoms, as it is existing in the human kingdom? Is not Divinity existing in the animal kingdom as much as it is in the human kingdom? Is not Divinity existing in the vegetable kingdom as much as it is existing in the animal kingdom? Is not Divinity existing in the mineral kingdom as much as it is existing in the vegetable kingdom? Indeed, Divinity is all pervading. Verily it is Omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. As such we have not the least right to confine it any particular kingdom, for it is the common property of the whole.

Though the Divinity is not to be confined to any one particular Kingdom or race or religion, still we cannot help but say *The Divinity of Man*. For, in man alone the Divinity is consciously manifesting. Indeed the Divinity is all-pervading, and it is in every animal and everything. However, can they manifest it? No. Yet, man has manifested it from the beginning of creation, from time to time in every age. And he can manifest it even now if he can pay the proper price for the same.

Have you ever read in any book or heard any learned Teacher preaching anything about the Divinity of the tiger, monkey or snake? Tigers are too ferocious to manifest the Divinity. Monkeys are too restless to manifest the Divinity. Snakes are too poisonous to manifest the Divinity. However, if man can only rise above his ferociousness or restlessness and other passionate natures, he will not fail to manifest the Divinity. For, it has been given to man and man alone to manifest the Divinity consciously. It has not been given to any other creature on earth.

Indeed, we are not called men or human beings just because we are rich owning dollars in banks and many other possessions and jewels in our homes. We are not called men because of our strength and beauty. We are not called men because of the superficial knowledge. We have of so many things in the world. We are called men, not even because we are talking machines, but because of our conscious manifestation of our Divinity. If it is not for that Divine manifestation, what difference is there between us and the animals, except in forms and names? If we are not manifesting that Divinity, we too are as human beasts or two legged animals.

Man is made in the image of God, so let him be worthy of his creation. Indeed, man's birthright is Divinity alone. Therefore it must be manifested at any cost. If Divinity is not the birthright of man, we would not have seen the prophets and Saviours of humanity in the past. There would not have been Christs, Krishnas, Buddhas and other Divine souls, who have manifested their glory in setting an example for others to follow in their footsteps.

We can never make a piece of charcoal white, even though we rub and scrub it day after day. But we can make a mirror shining and bright by wiping off the dust which is on it. When the dust of ignorance is removed from the mirror of our consciousness, Divinity fails not to shine in all Glory. So

we are never the charcoal, but always the shining mirrors. Therefore let us manifest our Divinity by wiping away the ignorance. The Divinity alone is the only reality. It has been existing in us from time immemorial. We are here to manifest it now, silently and gradually day by day.

In the first place, let us understand our present helpless states of outer life. Let us know where we are not! Let us know whether we are manifesting our Divine nature or animal nature. When we can examine and understand our present stage, we will be able to make further progress and to rise to higher states of consciousness.

Here I am reminded of a beautiful poem from the scriptures of India. In the verse the devotee offers the following prayer to God, *'Oh Almighty Father! Animal birth is superior to a human birth, if one is not going to realise the Divinity. For, You have created beasts only to live in ignorance and they are living their life in senses, whereas You have made man to manifest Your Divinity. If we are misusing your Divine mercy, we deserve to be punished for our faithlessness and ignorance. As we are thy children, save us and help us to manifest our Divine Glory.'*

So dear friends, let us understand where we are. Let us realise even now why we are given these human forms. Let us thus utilise them in the service of God, manifesting His Divinity. Thought is only another word for fate. By thought alone we are creating our environment. What we are not has been the result of our past desires and thoughts. What we will be in the future will be determined by our present thoughts. So be careful of your thoughts.

Man alone is the master of his own destiny. There is not any creator outside of us pushing us from one side to the other side. We are not mere forms of changes. We are the images of God; our mind alone is the creator. So let the mind be engaged unceasingly in manifesting our Divinity. It is in our power to be great or small. It is within us to fall down or to rise. Rely not on any outside powers! Rely on the Great Power which is ever within you. Believe in your Divinity.

Your own Divinity is dearest of the dear and nearest of the near. It is inseparable One, it is your only birthright. When you cannot believe in it, how can you believe in outside powers or gods? Learn to stand on your own feet. You will be lifeless if you rely on these seeming forms and outside powers. You will be all life, all strength and all peace when you learn to rely on your own Divinity. This alone is the beginning of religion.

Religion begins not with going to church or by reading Bibles. Verily ***Religion begins only in the belief of one's Divinity. And it ends in the conscious manifestation of Divinity.*** This is the whole of religion expressed in two short sentences. Do you understand now what religion is? Allow me to repeat these two great truths again. ***Religion begins only in the belief of one's Divinity. And it ends in the conscious manifestation of Divinity.***

Sages have repeatedly said, *'God if you think, God you are. Dust if you think, dust you are.'* Now shall we become gods by thinking and meditating on our Divine Nature or shall we become devils by meditating on the lower nature? Like attracts like. What good will it do if we always repeat, *'We are sinners and we are full of sins and weaknesses'*? Verily we will become what we think.

There is no power, either in earth or heaven, that can make anyone holy when he is all the while repeating and believing that he is sinful. So believe not in your weaknesses, but believe in your strength and Divine Nature. Divinity is never away or separate from you, whether in the past, present or future.

Within and without there is nothing but Divinity. You are filled with Divinity and you are surrounded with Divinity. When such is the Living Truth, how can you call yourself weak or sinful? The forgetfulness of the Divine Nature alone makes you weak or sinful. Sin is nothing but weakness. Be filled with Divinity and thus give no place for sins. Now can darkness exist in the burning sun? So when you live as Divinity no weakness can dare to approach you.

How can we call ourselves sinners or mere nothings? Knowing that the Kingdom of Heaven is within us, repeating *'I and my Father are one'*, believing that we are made in the image of God, are

we not to be ashamed to call ourselves sinners? Can we, the Children of Immortality be ever sinners? Away with all such weak notions and mental hallucinations! We are nothing but Divinity and Divinity alone. Let us stand on this firm rock of Truth in every second of our lives. Then we will see how weakness can never dare to come near us! Sins visit us only when we invite them. They come to us when we believe in them. So, let us never believe again in sins, but always in our Divinity.

Dear Blessed Divinities on earth! Here you may ask, "What is the proof of our Divinity? Give us the proof! Show us the proof in our practical lives!"

Is there any proof of our Divinity? Oh, the proof of our Divinity is more accurate and correct than the proof in any of the physical sciences, such as Chemistry, physics and so on! Here the proof is instantaneous! The moment you merge within, God's breasts heaves with your breast. You will be astonished to see, one life, one principle, even one blood filling all space from the tiniest atom to the largest planet. You will behold your very heart throbbing in the heart best of all beings, beginning from the tiniest creature to the greatest sun.

If some of you still ignorantly say "Show us that proof," I have to answer them, "Oh Beloved Divinity, it is for you to see it, to feel it and to realise it. If it is separate from you I can show it. If it is outside of you, I would have shown it. When it is all the while within you, when you are that Divinity, how can I show it to you? I can see it for myself. Each one must feel for himself. I am feeling it now! May you all feel this indivisible Divinity is the only prayer of mine. OM! Peace!

Now let us try to understand our relationship with Divinity, even from our physical consciousness. Let us take into consideration our own lives, with the help of some illustrations. Suppose as an example we take a King and his Kingdom. There is a King living in his Kingdom. What is the relationship between the King and his Kingdom? Is our relationship with Divinity like the statement of a King and his Kingdom? Are we concerned with our Divinity as a King is concerned with his Kingdom? Understand the statement, '*The Kingdom of a King and the Divinity of Man.*' See the difference in these two statements.

A King can renounce his Kingdom, he may become a beggar or he may go away from his Kingdom. Like the King, can we renounce our Divinity? Can we live away from Divinity? Can we forsake Divinity? No, no! Wherever we go, Divinity is there. In short, we are never separate from Divinity.

Now let us take a more sensible and appealing illustration. There is a red snake. Is the colour red different from the snake? No, it is not different or separate from the snake. Still the colour is an attribute of the snake. Can you separate the colour red from the snake? Can you place snake on one side and red on the other side? Thus we see the snake and the colour red are inseparable. In the same way, men and the Divinity are inseparable as in the case of the snake and its colour.

This appears to many as very reasonable and quite right. But when we rise a step higher and judge it from the Truth consciousness or the Highest standard, this apt and sensible illustration falls short and even appears wrong. For in Truth there can be never two things. You cannot place in one sheath two swords. Only one thing at a time. There cannot be both man and Divinity. Either the man or Divinity must exist. Divinity cannot be the colour or attribute of man as in the case of a red snake.

We will understand this more clearly if we take another striking illustration to make us realise that two things can never exist in Truth. Suppose you are returning home in a dark night. In the darkness you behold a snake and get yourself frightened and scared away. However steadying yourself, with the light of wisdom or discrimination, you will examine it carefully. Then to your astonishment you will find it to be merely a rope, but never a snake. The idea of the snake has frightened you to death.

So long as there is that wrong thought, you are miserable. When once you understand the Truth as Truth, the rope as a rope alone, there is no more fear. Then the idea of snake has entirely vanished from your consciousness. Here you are to understand that the snake is never the attribute of

the rope. You are to follow me closely giving your undivided attention to understand this living truth practically. Here we see one thing alone exists, never two things. When you mistook the rope for the snake, the rope idea has disappeared from your mind. There snake alone is existing for you, so you are afraid. But when you assert the rope as a rope alone, you can see there no more any snake.

In the same way you never be both a man and Divinity. Can you see at the same time both the rope and snake? Can you see both darkness and sun? So when you are Divinity, you are no longer a man or woman. When you are a man or a woman, you are no longer the Divinity. You cannot keep both the Divine and physical consciousness. You cannot worship both God and Mammon at the same time. If you are clinging to the physical, to the man idea, you are hiding the Spiritual, the Divine.

Each time you feel that you are a man or woman, you are killing Divinity. You are placing yourself in the delusion of a snake in a rope. When it is only a rope why should you mistake it for a snake and thus be made lifeless and miserable? When you are always the Divinity why should you cling to the unreal body and be hypnotised into a life of wretchedness?

Dear Divine Ones, wake up from your long hypnotised slumbers. You are the Divinities alone, whether in the past, present or future. You are never the snakes of delusion! When you mistook the rope for a snake, can it be changed into a snake? No, it is your mind that changes. The rope remains as rope alone. So in spite of your clinging to these momentary forms, you are the Divinity alone. You can never be changed. Neither can you be lessened.

As Divinity, manifest your Divine Nature. Sleep no more! Assert your Godhead, your only real birthright. This is life. This is religion. And this is the only changeless Truth. So this illustration of a snake in a rope is the only fitting and exact illustration. It makes us understand that we are one without a second and that we are never these bodies, but always the Divinity. By rising above the snake idea one is knowing the rope. In the same way, if we can only forget these physical bodies, if we can only rise above this physical consciousness, we will not fail to taste the nectar of our Blessed Divinity.

Please pardon me for my constant repetition of the same idea. But I have to repeat it again and again to impress on your minds, that you are never these changing forms of clay. You are always the changeless Divinity or the eternal Truth. All will be well when you can stand on that Truth consciousness. You will understand your Divinity when you place yourself in the possession of Divinity.

You will never understand this living Truth just because you are hearing me. You will never understand this by reading Bibles and Vedas! You will not understand this glaring Truth practically, even though you sit at the feet of all the Masters of the world. Christ and Buddha can do us very little help unless we take our salvation into our own hands. Every man must be his own Saviour! Every woman must be her own Saviour! Prophets and Saviours can show us the path. They can only tell us what is real and unreal, what is Truth and what is untruth. However, it remains with us to walk in the path of Truth, rising above all forms and names and thus manifest our Divinity in our own turn.

Some of you may say, *'When we are Divinity, why are we not able to manifest it? Why are we not able to behold it?'* Indeed the question why we cannot see or behold the Divinity is awkward and meaningless. For our Divinity is not a thing or form, neither is it away from us! We are to merge within and feel it for ourselves in moments of silence. It is on account of the deep rooted ignorance alone that people are not able to manifest and realise the Divinity, though they are that Divinity.

In the Gita, the Song Celestial, we are taught of the gunas, Tamas, Rajas and Sattwa. These are the three kinds of qualities or natures. The first is the dark or passive state, the second is the active state and the third is the state of harmony. A quality is a quality, so even in the Highest state of harmony also we find a little of ignorance. Thus this Divinity though indivisible and eternal, is for the time covered by these gunas or qualities. If one is very gross and ignorant, his Divinity will be very deeply buried in the mire of delusion. To understand the sheaths of ignorance and these three

qualities, let us take three striking illustrations from the Gita itself. They will illustrate each nature and temperament and how Divinity is covered by these qualities.

Take a mirror covered with dust. It takes only a second to wipe off that dust. Then, there you are reflected clearly. This illustrates the Highest state of harmony. Even there the Divinity is covered by a little dust. However, very little effort is needed to manifest the Divinity.

Then take a flame of a candle or some other lamp. You see the flame is covered with smoke. Wherever there is flame, there is smoke. It is not so easy to separate them. But a little wind dispels the smoke, though the smoke begins to come again and again. This illustrates the middle state, namely the active nature. Here the Divinity is covered more than in the case of the state of harmony. Here strenuous and constant practice is needed to manifest the Divinity.

Now to understand the dark state or the lowest stage of ignorance, we are to take the illustration of an embryo covered with foetus. Here the ignorance is rather too deep. It cannot be removed just by wiping away with the hand as in the first case. Neither can a gust of wind disperse or separate the embryo from the foetus. It takes its own time to get its freedom. This is the darkest state of ignorance. Even though this is the lowest and darkest state of ignorance, by unceasing and persistent effort one fails not to get freedom.

All must understand for themselves their own sheaths of ignorance. If they are in the dark state they are to strive to rise into the active state. Then, from the active state to the Highest state of Harmony. There the task will be easy and one can consciously manifest the Divinity, the goal of human birth.

In short the bad tendencies should be conquered by the good tendencies, and the good tendencies should be conquered in their turn by the Divine tendencies. This goes on until one rises to that Great State where he is free from every kind of tendency or quality. Realising which, one is realising all that is to be realised. Reaching which, one is reaching all that is to be reached and where one remains no longer as a man, but as God or Divinity. There he will not sell his birthright to this religion or that faith. All creeds and religions belong to such a free soul. The whole world belongs to Him. Everything is in Him alone. Such is the Glory of Truth or Divinity.

My Dear Loving Friends, I have nothing else to add to our present subject except to close it by giving to you one more illustration. It is to convince you that the Divinity is never separate or outside of you. All the while it has been lying with you and within you alone and verily, you are that Divinity.

When I say that you are that Divinity alone, I am not alluding to these physical bodies. There are many people who are quoting from the Bible that these bodies are the temples of God. Thus they are worshipping the temple, neglecting the God who is within the temple. Are we to crucify God in the worship of the body? Let us respect it by all means, as far as it helps us in manifesting our Divinity.

Now as for our illustration, let us suppose that one of our brothers here was unhappy because he had lost his favourite ring. Let us say he was very sorry to lose his ring, perhaps it was his wedding ring. He was searching for it here and there and everywhere. But he could not find it. He went to every place that he remembered to have visited, but he could not find it anywhere. He asked all his friends for their help in getting back his lost ring. No one could give him any help.

Somebody even suggested to burn candles in the churches. Some other one said to write for the prayers of Unity Centre to recover his ring. Thus he made himself restless and unhappy in search of the ring. His wife, seeing his helpless condition said, "What will you give me if I show you your ring?" He said, "Oh, I will give you anything!" Then she simply placed her hand in his vest pocket and took the ring out. Thus he felt astonished and amused also for his own foolishness in searching for the ring. It had been in his pocket all the while! But he had been searching for it in the streets and other places, everywhere except at the right place where it was!

Thus Dear Friends, our Divinity has been all the while lying within us, not as a ring alone, but as an inseparable principle of life, light and love. Having it all the while within us, what is the use of searching for it outside of us? The search after Divinity in temples and churches is all in vain. In vain the search after Truth in books and saviours. In vain the search after God in hills and dales. Make a retreat from these outer searches! Begin to search even now, where the Divinity is. It is really within you!

Merge within! You will find it there. It has been waiting to be remembered and embraced by you! Verily, Thou art the Divinity. Thou art nothing but Divinity. Divinity, Divinity, art thou OM!

My Dear Divine Ones, Divinity is not a thing to be bought. Waste no more your energy in trying to buy it. Spare your dollars. You cannot buy Divinity with all the wealth in the world. Even to search for Divinity is nothing but ignorance. You should search for a thing when it is separate from you. When you are that Divinity, why are you to search? Where are you to search? When you understand that you are the Divinity all these vain searches will be stopped.

When there is nothing besides you, why have you to search? Rise above ignorance of all these restless wanderings and searches! Rise from one plane to another plane, until you stand on the Truth. As said in the sacred books of the East, let your senses merge in the mind and the mind in the intellect. Then let the intellect merge into the 'I' and the 'I' into the Universal Self or Divinity. This is the goal and the birthright.

If there is Peace anywhere in the world, it is here in your Divinity. If there is Bliss anywhere in the world, it is only here in your Divinity. If there is eternal Life anywhere in the world, it is only here in your own living Divinity. So cling more and more to your own loving Divinity, ever merging in it.

May we meditate always and unceasingly on the Divinity. It is seeing in all our eyes, it is hearing in all our ears and it is working in all our hands. That Loving Divinity is also thinking in all our minds. May we meditate on this Holy Divinity which is inseparably one with us. It is filling all our bodies and it is coursing in our veins and blood. It is the life and source of all creation.

May we ever meditate on this Glorious Divinity which is pervading and permeating all the kingdoms of life, beginning from the mineral, passing thorough the vegetable and animal to the Highest Kingdom of man.

May we meditate on the Adorable Divinity which is verily above time, space and causation. It is all in all. May we merge and dissolve in the inexpressible and incomprehensible Splendour, of our Divine birthright.

MAY PEACE BE UNTO ALL! OM TAT SATI

IN THE COMPANY OF BIRDS

July, 1930, 8 PM, Santa Susanna Hills

Birds above, below and all around me. How I love these little ones. How innocent and contented they are. How the Father takes care and feeds them.

"Consider the fowls of the air, they neither sow nor reap, yet the Heavenly Father feedeth them." These are the words of loving Christ who has a heart for these little ones.

The God that created the birds has created food for them. They tell not, yet He feedeth them. What about the man who toils and yet starves for lack of understanding? He needs the faith, even as much as that of a mustard seed.

There is plenty in the store house of God, yet man is dying of starvation. There are many who are choked with too much wealth. they are wasting their precious time in over eating, etc.

Man needs understanding, the recognition of His presence and equality. Man needs the manifestation of love, so that all will have their equal share and common right.

After all, the man with contentment can be satisfied with just a little. If he has contentment and faith in God, he needs very little to satisfy himself.

Here is a faucet of water. Even though it is closed, drop after drop will be falling unceasingly on the earth, irrespective of day and night. I always sit near by it, within a yard's distance, watching its regular flow.

Little birds come and drink a drop or two of water to satisfy their thirst; just a drop is enough for them. They do not worry about storing the water or grains. They live in the present moment trusting Him. Moment by moment He takes care of them.

If only man would learn to trust God, living for the present moment, how happy he will be! If he could leave aside the uncertain future and all worries and cares, he would be just like a happy bird.

As I am writing now at the early hours of the day, enjoying the company of birds, there are nearly a hundred birds of different kinds all around me. Sparrows of different kinds, humming birds, quail, blue jay, doves, and many other kinds of birds and other tiny creatures and loving insects.

Some of them are singing and some are playing. A few of them are having their drink after the early breakfast.

I share my watermelon, cantaloupe, etc., with all these little brothers and sisters of the bird kingdom. I love to feed and watch them. It does good to any hard-headed soul to watch them while they pick the grains and drink the water.

Sometimes they fly over my head and come as near as two or three inches to me. Blessed are their innocent hearts. They understand my love.

What great joy it gives to be the friend of every bird and every living creature on earth! This alone is real life, in every sense of the word.

Love and be loved in return is the law of life, applying to every kingdom. Who is there that cannot be touched to see the other bird feeding its young, putting its beak into the little one's mouth?

Unity is life and separation is death. What joy is there in clinging to a form and name like a block of wood? Joy is in unity but not in separation. Then why not feel and enjoy infinite life considering all life as your own? Whether you know it or not, the one who is shining in the little eyes of a bird or an ant is the same one who is shining in your eyes. So recognise all life as one in the name of God, Truth and Love.

Love alone is the only true law in this world. It is the law of laws. When everything fails, it is love that wins. So stand by love and manifest your inherent love to win the whole world.

Love is part and parcel of our lives. We cannot hide it. We can live without food and drink but not without love.

As we live in the hills we must love the rocks, flowers, plants, birds, and all other insects and animals. This is Christ's life and not the rest of it.

Yesterday was rather a very hot day. I felt sorry for the birds for they came near me with parched throats, and their little beaks parted to drink a drop or two of water from the faucet. They are so innocent and loving! How can anyone be so heartless and cruel as to kill and shoot these harmless ones? Such a one must be a cannibal, devoid of heart without any feelings or remorse.

Yet, we have Christs and Buddhas who are ready to sacrifice their lives to save the life of a tiny bird. What a great contrast between the latter and former! One finds pleasure in shooting and killing innocent birds, and the other finds consolation in giving his life to save the life of a bird.

I wonder how many births one has to take to realise the Christ state of life from his low state of ignorance.

Whosoever offends any of these little ones, the innocent children of God's family, it is better to tie a millstone around his neck and fall into the ocean. Thus the words of loving Christ apply not only to the little children of human kingdom but even for innocent and harmless birds.

When you cannot give life what right have you to take life? If you cannot help or love, sit aside, stay away. But, in the name of God, the giver of all life, in the name of Love the only sacred law, please never harm any living creature on the earth.

A little bird is as much dear to the Lord as you are, maybe it is nearer to God than you, because of its guilelessness, purity and innocence. As I am writing this essay one little bird is watching me winking its eye mischievously as if to say, "*I know what you are writing, it is all about us. Thank you for your love and interest in us. We appreciate it with gratitude.*" This recognition touched my heart. This unity and perfect understanding brings tears to my eyes.

Oh! Little birds of the air, children of the same God, blessed ones of freedom and innocence, teach us to be happy and innocent like you. Teach us to be loving and care-free like you. Teach us to have faith and trust in Him like you. Teach us to sing the song of freedom, taking life in an easy way like you. Teach us to be free from this feverish rush and hurry, rising above the ignorant spirit of possession and accumulation. Above all, teach us the great law that in loving you, we are loving only the Almighty who is One without a second, our common Father.

Now, oh sweet birds of freedom and innocence, pray, do come nearer and join me in offering the prayer to the indweller of our heart.

Oh, God of bird, beast and man! Thou art the Creator of the manifested and the unmanifested, the animate and the inanimate. Bless us with the understanding that all life is one, and as such it is precious and sacred. Fill our hearts with more love, as love alone is the greatest law. It unites not only religions and nations, but all the various kingdoms of life mineral, vegetable, animal and human into one kingdom of absolute love, wherein the atoms and suns are included.

May glory be unto Thee and may peace abide in the hearts of all Thy children in all the kingdoms of life. This is all that we ask of Thee. Amen. Aum.

*Offered to all the little brothers and sisters of the Bird Kingdom, with love
and appreciation of their trust and affection.*

OM! OM! OM!

INITIATION

Many are called but few are chosen. -- Bible

Out of thousands who aspire after me only one or two reaches me.

Bhagavad Gita

Thus the Holy scriptures of both the East and the West are teaching us about the greatness and the impossibility of attaining the Highest state with little effort.

After my coming to America I have given instructions for higher life to more than a hundred people and practical initiation to nearly fifty people for realising the state of Peace or Nirvana in the best logical, scientifically and natural way. However, alas, to confess the bare truth, I am almost ashamed to write here, not even six people are following the instructions simplicity to the very word, to fit themselves to be worthy of taking further initiations.

What can be the reason? Often in my silence, I ask my self whether the mistake is mine, for my pupils falling away from the path of Truth. What can I do? I have placed all that is mine at their service lovingly and cheerfully. I have not taught them any secret, mystical or harmful doctrines. What I teach is the most natural law of Universal Love. Even this I teach according to the temperament, state and ability of the pupil. If one is beginner, I teach the elementary stage. If one is already on the way, I teach the next suitable step for them. If one is in the higher stage, I teach them the higher truth.

Some said that my teachings are over their heads. What am I to do? If I ask them to close their ear drums and to hear something unnatural or if I suggest to them to contact the masters of Himalayas and Tibet, perhaps my teaching will come into their heads. If I teach to some others that angels will come and crown them with laurels or worldly glory and they will be seated on the right hand side of God's throne in heaven, what I say will be more appreciated.

Even to get the sympathy of these poor things, I cannot lower myself. Even at the cost of death I will never teach anything other than the living Truth. Let all forsake me, what is that to me? I am willing to stand alone by the side of Truth as living Truth.

There is another reason why my initiations are not appreciated. Here in America, the land of the Mighty Dollar, everything is weighted by money. Even Initiations are sold. Unless Initiations have price of their own, they will not be appreciated, valued or respected. If I sell my Initiations for 100 Dollars then they will be considered as a costly and valuable Initiations.

Because they are free, they are considered cheap and common. Whether people consider them cheaply or costly, common or worthy, I can never place a price on my Holy Initiations. I will never be so mean as to stoop to give the living Christ for 30 pieces of silver. Am I to act like Judas to get the respect of the people? Let people ignore my Initiation, but I will still keep them as free as air, for everyone who is walking in the path of Truth.

Whether my Initiations are practical or not, I am not in any way a looser. Every time I initiate others I initiate myself. Before I initiate anyone, I have to initiate myself. Thus I am going strong by each and every Initiation. I am not afraid of initiating more and more, even if they neglect and forsake me. My duty is only to sow seeds of love in all the tender and innocent hearts of all those who come to me. Every seed that is sown lovingly and desirelessly is bound to sprout sooner or later. I have to water the seeds of these initiations from time to time with the life giving water of my Universal Love.

What a great joy it is to love others for the sake of love! What a great blessedness it is to serve others for the sake of duty! Indeed, in loving others I love myself. In serving others I serve myself. In initiating others I initiate myself. So, Blessed forms of mine! Pray do come to me, all these who are in need of my initiation or guidance, considering me as your own loving and willing guide and servant.

OM SHANTI OM!

LOVE AND PEACE

Sri Mariya Ashram, (Untitled, first page missing)

With this simple 'love' there is no space for separation, strife or disagreement. Real love cannot be divided. No one can place a boundary line for love. It excluded none but it embraces all, irrespective of differences from the tiniest atom to the biggest sun.

Oh, what else do we need if we could only feel that we are one in this Great Love? Love is God. Have we not all come from God? Are we not all living in God, and bound to merge in Him alone sooner or later? When we are always one, and never separate, whether in the past, present or future, what necessity is there of these differences in castes, creeds, colours and nationalities? All these differences are only in the outer, on the surface, but never in the Spirit.

Are we not yet tired of these outer names and forms of religions and nationalities? Has not the time come to behold the same spirit within and without, in one and all? How long shall we cling to these outer garment of religions? Peace is never on the surface, it is deep within our own selves. It is disgrace being the children of immortality, to be satisfied with the toys of names and forms. So long as we cling to names and forms, we cannot help but have strife and differences. So let us fling aside these outer garbs and try to taste the nectar of Peace, which is our Divine birthright. We can do this by merging within, in that great love that knows no change or difference.

We all wish to see the whole world filled with Peace. We crave with heart and soul for the world's Peace. Glory be unto all of us! Yet what are we doing for spreading this Peace in the world? Can the world be filled with Peace just by our wishes? Nothing can be done by mere words and empty wishes. Let charity begin at home. Let Peace begin first in your own lives. Without having Peace in you, how can you dare to think of filling the whole world with Peace? A beggar is not expected to give a dinner to the whole world. when there is Peace within you, you can spread the same Peace without also.

The easiest and nearest way of filling the world with Peace is to fill our lives with Peace. Then we should radiate the same Peace in our homes and to share it with all those who come in contact with us. If everyone tries to live an ideal life of Peace, surely the world will be filled with Peace. Before we think of giving Peace to others we must be emblems of Peace. So let us be filled with Peace in this second alone, both for our good and for the welfare of the world. This alone is the surest and direct way of elevating the world.

So I pray for all the well-wishers of Humanity and for all the Peace Makers, to live in Eternal Peace or Universal love, and thus help the world in thought, word and deed. May Peace alone reign in all the hearts of all of us, is my constant prayer!

OM! OM! OM!

MESSAGE OF PEACE AND LOVE

*A Message of Peace and Love for the Brothers and Sisters of the Deaf
and Dumb Society, Philadelphia, Pa., USA.*

Dear Beloved Brothers and Sisters! It is a great privilege for me to be requested by your worthy President, Mr. Ellis Lit, to convey my simple Message of Peace and Love unto your devoted hearts. I cannot express to you my joy in considering you all as my own brothers and sisters. Thus I can serve you in the humble capacity, as a servant of the Almighty Father. Dear Beloved Ones, I feel and sympathise with you in your great cause, and I love you all, as I love this body. It will be a great opportunity for me, if I can serve you in any way.

In the first place let us remember and ever keep the living truth of our oneness with God, whether we are rich or poor, deaf or dumb. We are all children of the same Almighty Father. What a great joy it is to feel that we are the children of our Immortal Father! Really our Peace, Joy and Hope consists only in our oneness with God. Let us not be blind to this inseparable oneness of ourselves with God. We are the children of God, therefore we are living, moving and having our beings only in God. Sooner or later we are bound to go back or merge in Him alone.

Is there not Infinite joy in our indivisible oneness with God? We are never separate from God whether in the past, present or future. This is life! Real life is only in God. So Dear Blessed Ones, pray enjoy your lives only by living in God. Do not confine God to a church or temple. Face Him everywhere, for He is Omnipresent. See Him in everyone, for He is within and without.

In the name of God, do not be blind to this Living Truth. *"Eyes have they, yet they see not. Ears have they, yet they hear not."* These are the holy precepts of the Holy Christ. We are seeing every day and everywhere, thousands of people who are denying God, having eyes and ears. Blessed are you my deaf and dumb brothers and sister. You being deaf are trying to hear the inner voice of God. Being dumb you are trying to comprehend the Glory of Truth.

Dear ones, choose now! Do you wish to be one of the many who having eyes are not seeing God and having ears are not hearing the word of God? Or, do you wish to remain as God made you? He made you to behold Him, feel and work for Him, whether you have physical eyes, ears and organs of speech or not. For my part, without the least hesitation I rather choose not only to be deaf and dumb, but even blind and lame, if I can live in God in every second of my life.

What are these eyes for, if they cannot behold God? What are these ears for if they cannot listen to the word of God? What are these hands and legs for if they cannot work for Truth or God? What is this mind for if it is not consecrated to God? What is this life for if it cannot be dedicated in service of God? Is it not for realising God that we are given these human bodies? Then blessed are the lives that serve Him whether they have eyes and ears or not! Cursed and wasted are the lives that forget the aim of the human life and are spent in the mire of worldliness.

Dear Devoted Ones, I love to give you one of the living illustrations from the life of a sister of mine, whom I had the honour to know personally. It will make you understand and realise your present state of physical environments. God made her deaf as one of you. However, the greatness in her life is she never feels sorry for her deafness. On the contrary she is blissful and happy because of her deafness. I have heard her saying to the people who complained of her deafness, that she is more fortunate than others because she will never be troubled with the disturbances of the world and its vain and lifeless talks. Thus she considers her deafness a special blessing from God instead of a drawback.

To go deeper in to her holy life, she used to spend a part of her time in the company of spiritual teachers. Once a great saint used to cure the diseases of the people, by his blessings and thought-force or will-force. She happened to be the most devoted disciple of that Holy saint. Even though she was loved and adored she never opened her mouth to ask the saint to make her free from deafness. The relatives of our deaf sister even suggested to her to get her ears cured by her holy Master. Yet do you know what she has replied to these relatives? She said, "Oh dear ones! When my Master has something permanent and unchanging to give to me, how can I ask him temporary things and joys of the unreal body and world? He is giving me the life that is eternal. What do I care for this momentary body? Whether I hear or not, this body is going to pass off sooner or later. So let me get from my Master that which passes not and gives me Eternal Peace."

So Dear Blessed Ones, keeping this holy sister's life as a living proof of contentment and happiness, may I request you also to be ever cheerful and happy, like your fellow sister in India? Consider your ailments also as Blessings in disguise. Never feel sorry for your deafness or dumbness. On the contrary, you have every right to be happy, because you are deaf and dumb to worldly things.

Do not even think that you are blind or deaf. The really blind people are those who having eyes are unable to see God. The really deaf people are those who having organs of hearing, are deaf to the living God. The really dumb people are those who having their brains are misusing it in mammon worship instead of in the worship of God. One who is working for God and who is ever living in Him, whether he is deaf or dumb whether he is blind or lame, such a one alone is worthy of all respect and homage. He deserves to be called a human being in every sense of the word, but not others who are only men or women in forms and names.

It is said in the Holy Scriptures that to realise God one must rise above senses and mind. Dear Ones, are you not Blessed now to an extent, as you are free from one or two of your senses? Do not consider these ailments as draw-backs. Consider them only as stepping stones in the evolution of the great life of God. Try to feel and make every draw-back as God's Blessing in disguise. Thus proceed on and on, until you rise above all senses and mind and completely merge in God-consciousness.

Do not think that I am a queer fellow having neither love nor sympathy for you. Oh Beloved Ones, I have the greatest sympathy and love for all of you! Indeed I feel for you. However, I have to confess to you that I feel more for those millions and millions of people who having eyes are not seeing God. I feel more for those who having ears are not listening to the inner voice of God. I feel more for those who having brains are not comprehending God or Truth. Poor souls! They are restlessly busy in counting dollars in the name of mammon worship.

Are these eyes given unto us only to see moving pictures and theatres? Are these ears given unto us to hear words of the world? Are these minds given unto us only to dedicate for the worship of mammon? I really wish these would not be given for misuse but for proper use in the service of God, and in helping our fellow brothers and sisters.

My Dear Blessed Ones, I do not wish to take any more of your time now. If I am to be given the opportunity of serving you, I shall avail myself of the same at some other time. So in conclusion, let me impress on your innocent minds again that we are born here as human beings only for realising God. Our happiness is only in God. Sooner or later all of us must reach Him for final Peace. The sooner we reach and merge in Him the better for us.

God can be felt whether one has eyes or not. God can be realised whether one has ears or not. For, the Almighty Lord is never separate from any of us. He is both in and out of all of us, even if some of us are deaf and dumb physically. As repeatedly said by me, the real deaf and dumb are those who are living for the world, forgetting the aim of their precious lives. If you are working for God, ever striving to live in Him, then Glory and Honour be unto you. For, you alone are not deaf and dumb in the whole world. You alone are living for God. God never judges us by our deafness or dumbness, but by our pure and selfless life in Him.

So considering our ailments or draw-backs as Blessings of the Almighty, let us be happy, contented and peaceful. Let us always serve the Lord in cold and hunger. Let us face Him in all forms and names, irrespective of religions and nations. Thus doing our duty for duty's sake, let us realise the goal of our present lives, ever keeping our indivisible oneness with the Almighty Father.

May God Bless you all with profound Peace, is the prayer of your humble brother, Swami Omkar.

MAY PEACE BE UNTO ALL! OM! OM! OM!

MESSAGE OF TRUTH

My Dear Beloved Brothers and Sisters, Blessings of the Almighty be on all of you. I cannot express to you my joy and gratitude in seeing you all here again and I leave it to your own imagination. My joy consists not just in seeing you alone, but in feeling you all as my own. What right have I to call you all as my own? My right in calling you all as my own is not by one reason but by many reasons.

As we are all the children of the same Almighty Father, you are all related to me, physically, mentally and spiritually. As you consider me as your own brother and look forward to my help and service in your spiritual progress, I can call you all as my own. Above all, as the living Spirit, the All-pervading Self, I feel and realise that you are all in me.

We are never the unreal and momentary bodies, we are the Divine Self alone. These bodies are temples of God. Shall we cling and worship only these temples at the risk of sacrificing God?

As such when we feel that we are Truth or Self, which is within and without the body-temple but never the body alone, we cannot help admitting our Divine and united Oneness. As Divinity we are related to each other. We are One. However without helping each other it is nothing but sheer ignorance to glorify our Oneness. As Truth I am one with you. As Truth you are one with me. As Truth or Divinity we are all one and never two.

Verily, real joy consists only in this united oneness and Universal Love. What joy is there in feeling that I am separate from you? What joy is there in feeling that I am higher than all of you or that you are all lower than I am? If I am higher, you too must be higher. My joy consists only in feeling you all are my own but never in separation.

I feel most miserable and forlorn when I think or feel that anyone is separate from me. There is no separation or division in Truth or God. All separations and weaknesses are only in body, and we are never the bodies. These bodies came to us according to our own desire. They surely belong to us, as much as a book or pen belongs to us. The book belongs to us but we are never the book. The pen belongs to us but we are never the pen. In the same way we can never be the bodies. For before these bodies came we have been existing.

Even with these bodies we are the same Truth and even at the dissolution of these bodies we will remain the same Divinity. Everything that has a birth has a death. Everything that has a beginning has an end. Absolute Spirit, the Divinity, is beginningless, so it is endless. It is birthless, so it is deathless.

So shall we now identify ourselves with our Birthright, the Divine Truth or with the unreal body which is bound to perish either today or tomorrow? Shall we worship the delusion or Reality? Are we for God or for Mammon? Here are both poison and immortality for us. Whatever we want we can have. However, the results are inevitable and distinct from each other. By relying on Divinity and by drinking deep the nectar of immortality, we are becoming immortal and deathless. And by drinking poison relying on a mere form and name, we are falling into depths of ignorance and perishing in delusion. So Dear Beloved Ones, I pray to all of you to rely always on God, your Divinity. As a brother of yours what else can I say to you?

If I love you all really, if you are all my own dear ones, how can I ever see you leading lifeless lives, filled with misery, hurry and worry and finally dying in ignorance? As such, in the name of the love I bear for all of you, in the name of Truth I appeal and request you all to live always in God. Ever identify yourselves with the Truth, for verily you are nothing but Truth. If you can only rise above the plane of changes, you will not fail to realise your Divine Birthright.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, I know some of you are coming to me from long distances. What are you coming here for dear beloved ones? You are coming here undoubtedly only in search after God. If it is not for God, why will you come here? You would not have come here. You are taking all this trouble only in the name of God. Yet dear ones, I have to tell you here of one thing. If you are coming here expecting to find that Peace or God, in this hall or even in me, you are entirely mistaken. I am sorry for your misconception.

Do you confine the All-pervading God to mere forms and places? If you cannot find Him in your own selves, how can you expect to find Him within me? If He is within you, He is within me also. As God, He is all-pervading and eternal. So let us feel His presence everywhere, wherever we maybe, whatever we may have been doing and in every moment of our lives. Then alone you can expect to find God here also. Thus only can you hope to enjoy Peace here also.

However, the God who was not within you before your coming here, is not expected to jump into your hearts just by you coming here. If you want to feel Peace here, you should bring your Peace with you from your own homes. If you want to find God here, you must find Him within yourselves even before coming here. And forgetting the God, who is within and without all the time, to expect to behold Him here is like desiring a thing without paying a proper price.

If we want a piano from the store we must be ready to pay the price. We must be prepared to pay the price sooner or later. Without paying the price, can you expect to get the piano? How foolish it is to say, "I want the thing and I will not pay the price." In the same way is it not foolishness to expect to realise God without the proper price of living in Him? We need to love Him with all the strength of our minds and with every heart beat of ours. The price for realising God is the crushing of individuality. Complete surrender or crucifixion of the "I" is the price from realising the Kingdom of Heaven.

There are those who say, "We want God." Yet, have they the time to think of Him? When they cannot spare even a few minutes for Him, how can they expect to realise Him? God is not such a fool as to be deceived or duped by intelligence and cunning. By trying to deceive God we are deceiving ourselves. By trying to dupe Him we are duping ourselves, ever filled with sorrows and miseries, falling into the pits that we ourselves are digging.

So Dear Beloved Ones, when God is all the while within you there is no use of wasting all the time in searching and running after Him, have burning desire for God. Weep and weep only for Truth. It is a privilege to weep for God. Blessed are they that weep for God. But in this Iron Age of outer civilisation, we find everywhere people weeping over unrealities. They weep for riches and they weep for children. Many more are weeping for the toys of the world. Why are we not seeing people weeping for God, the Living Truth? Everywhere we find the same blind search going on for God in the name of religion, and that religion is confined to churches and meditation classes. Can we expect to realise God by these outer forms and shows? Can God be trapped thus?

Here I am reminded of a beautiful illustration of a woman who was searching for a needle in the street under a gas light. She had lost the needle in her own home. When told of her own ignorance by a bystander, it seems she replied, "I cannot afford a light in my house. It is dark there and I have to do something. There is the light in the street, so I have been looking here for my lost needle." Is there any sense or meaning in this? Can that woman ever expect to find a needle in the street which was lost in the house, even if she searches for ages and ages?

The same has been the case with many of us. Ever neglecting and forsaking the Living God Who is within us, we are restlessly busy in searching for Him in Lodges and churches. Whenever we hear that a preacher or Swami has come, we run after him. Are they going to give us God? When we do not want God what can others do for us? When God is all the while abiding in our heart of hearts, what will be the result of our external searches?

Neither can we be quiet. Like the woman in the above story, we have to do something. We are searching for God everywhere except the place where He is. If we continue in this ignorant search, walking in the blind path, can we ever hope to realise God? Even though ages will pass we will be away from God.

By running after a shadow you can never catch it. The more you run, the more it goes ahead of you. Just stand still. Turn your back on the shadow. You will find the shadow itself following you. As such, so long as you search outside of you, you will be running after the shadows. When you search inside, in your own heart, there God has been patiently awaiting you from time immemorial. So pray stop your restless searches in outer things, places and persons. Merge within. There you are one with God or Truth.

Dear Beloved Ones, I was saying to you that you have been coming here from long distances, sacrificing your time, energy and money. I do not want you to be disappointed in your high hopes and expectations of realising God. By all means I want you to feel your united oneness with God. But the Truth is, unless you are ready for it, unless you are prepared for Him, unless you have come feeling His presence, you can never realise Him even though you go to the world's best teachers.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, as I cannot see anyone of you feeling frustrated in coming here, I pray to you ever and over again, to remember always that God is ever within you. I appeal to you not to confine Him to time or space, or to a name or form. By all means come here filled with the love of

God. Pray feel the same love or Divinity when you stay here. Depart with the same peace when you leave this place and come back again filled with the same Divinity. That is the way of realising God. This is the only way of rising above all worries and miseries. If you rely on Truth or God alone, all will be well. Do not forget to remember that with God we are everything and without Him we are nothing.

So let us be everything alone, feeling the Almighty's presence within and without and in every second of our lives. Let us face Him in one and all, as He is all in all. That is our ideal, the goal of our lives. Let us not lessen our idea in the name of weakness and ignorance. Even though we fall a thousand times, let us ever strive and strive to reach the Almighty. Even though we forget Him even a million times, let us attempt to remember Him each time we forget Him. The more times we forget our Godhead, the more is the privilege for us in remembering Him.

What else can I say to you Dear Beloved Ones? He is within, He is without. He is here, He is everywhere. He is not in any way separate from us. He and we are one. In that highest of consciousness, there is neither He nor we. It is all One without a second. It is our birthright. It is at our beck and call. It is inseparable. All that we are to do is to merge in the glory of that Oneness and Divinity.

May the Individuality be dissolved in the Universality. In the name of Truth may we all rise above the plane of the unreality to the plane of God-consciousness.

May we never forsake or exchange our Divine birthright, the glory of millions of suns, even for the rulership of the numberless worlds. May we cling to God either in death or life. May we never make these temporary temples, these physical sheathes or bodies as be-all and end-all or the God of our lives.

May peace, indivisible peace, eternal peace, dwell in the heart of every brother and sister of mine. This is the prayer of your brother, Swami Omkar.

AUM PEACE, PEACE AUM!

MY MESSAGE OF LOVE

To the Members of Sri Mariya Ashram

My Dear Beloved Sisters and Brothers! This is a Blessed day for the fulfilment of my long-cherished dreams and fond hopes. Verily the innocent desires of everyone will be realised sooner or later. The joy of sitting amidst my own dear Brothers and Sisters of my Beloved Mariya Ashram is simply inexpressible and I leave it to your imagination.

You may desire to know of my long cherished fond dreams. Therefore, I request you to allow me to go back into the days of my boyhood, although it is forbidden for monks to think of the past. Many of you may be astonished to hear that nearly twelve or thirteen years ago. I was in New York Harbour. I was a boy seventeen years of age, and I applied for entrance into this country at Ellis Island.

While being detained there I was interviewed by many representatives of the New York newspapers. I remember today that after a long interview with a lady representative, it was published in one of the leading journals of that great city. The following statement was published, along with many others: "When asked of his plans if permitted to land, he replied in his sing-song voice that he came as a bearer of light, and for the benefit of Humanity."

Of the several columns that they had written about me, I remember the above bold assertion even now. I remember it with feelings of mingled joy and spiritual oneness. However, now after the experience of several years I do not wish to take up the role of teacher or missionary.

Dear devoted ones, I come now not as a bearer of light, neither have I come as a teacher. I have come as a humble Brother of thine, for sharing my spirituality with you. I feel great joy in thinking that I have come here only to serve you, as a Brother of yours, but not to teach you. What have I to teach you dear Beloved Ones? Is not the same God both within and without all of us? As such, what can I teach you when it is all one without a second? So let me feel only my united oneness with you. I request you to give me a place in your dear hearts, considering me as one of your own Brothers.

Verily the bonds of flesh, or of physical relationships, are only for the time being and momentary. There real ties and bonds are of the Spirit and these are eternal. What a sweet thing it is to feel that I am eternal connected with one and all of you!

'Love and be loved in return,' is a great and holy precept. So Dear Beloved Ones, I request you all only to allow me to love you as my own Self. What a great privilege it is to consider you all as my own! May the Almighty Lord keep me fully worthy of this high calling.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, what can I do to be worthy of this great privilege? In what way can I be useful unto you? What can I do for you? As a monk who has renounced the world, what do you expect from me other than spirituality? I do not use the word spirituality in the sense of spirits and spiritualism. For me there is only one Spirit which is both within and without and which alone is the life and basis of all of us. Really, Brothers and Sisters, I wish to serve you spiritually.

Is not the spiritual service the greatest of all services? Giving food is momentary; we will feel hungry again. The same is the case in giving clothing or in imparting spiritual education. Any of these helps will not give Eternal Peace. Saving of life also, falls short of imparting spiritual food. It is not the material food that satisfies the soul's hunger. It is the spiritual food alone. It is the spiritual life alone that gives everlasting life and bliss. This only will raise you above hurry, worry and misery.

So, dear Ones, may your ideal also be to impart this spirituality alone unto one and all, irrespective of caste or creed, colour or religion. You will find all these differences only in men, but never in God. We are the children of the same Almighty Father, whether we call ourselves Christians, Hindus, Buddhists or any other followers of any other religion.

The goal is one and that is God, Truth, Self or call it by any other name. We are all to reach the same goal since we have all come from that common source. It matters very little whether we belong to this sect or to that religion. It is just enough that we are human beings and children of the same Almighty Father. Our bounded duty is to reach Him, sooner or later, never forgetting Him in the busy life of the world.

If there is purity, earnestness, sincerity and perseverance, all of us will surely become One with God. We will realise God, even though each one of us go to Him through different paths. As the numberless rays radiate from the Sun and are reflected or returned back to the Sun, so we are all numberless rays from the same Father. We must all sooner or later be reflected or returned back to Him. Our goal is there and there alone, whether we know it or not. Our goal is never in the momentary world, it is in God or Truth.

So Dear Devoted Brothers and Sisters, as a Brother of yours, I think that I have the right to request of you to also fill your minds always with spiritual life and aspirations, and thus realise the goal of human life.

As you have kindly given me a little space in your devoted hearts, I wish to fill you all with Truth and Divinity. Oh dear Brothers and Sisters, if I really love you and if you are my own Brothers and Sisters, how can I ever see you leading worldly lives, killing the Living God?

God is omnipresent. Truth is ever living, even by neglecting or forgetfulness. It can never be decreased. It is lying in and out of us, only to be awakened. With the consciousness of Truth we are everything. Without it we are nothing, even though we may be the richest men in money, power or intellect.

Our life is in God. Our Bliss is in God. Our peace is in God. As such why not seek in Him, why search in vain in the world of name and form and in finite things? So Dear Ones, can you find infinite joy in finite things? Dear Beloved Ones, please try to search where the real God of Peace is. Draw your minds from the external life to the internal life.

Try to merge within. Merge within. For real Peace is within alone. Verily the Kingdom of Heaven is within alone. When it is all the while lying within, near by thee, why play hide and seek, beating about the bush in the outer life of the world?

Here is Thy Divine heritage! Do not postpone it for the uncertain future, for the next moment is not ours. Verily this second alone is ours. As such, let us enjoy the living presence of the all-pervading Lord. Let us open our eyes to the beauties or inner life. May you all be blessed with a wisdom of the Blessed One. Dive deep into your own inner hearts. There the Blessed One is waiting for your with open arms. Merge in Him, become one with Him. Feel your united Oneness with Him in the Silent moments of Thy inner life. There you are One with Him. That is the religion practical and the goal of life.

Dear Beloved Ones, God cannot be realised with words alone. He will not be duped with intelligence or cunningness. These will be useful only in the temporary life. Books and lectures will not take us into His Holy Presence. It is the feelings of oneness and love that takes us into the Kingdom of God.

Do we want God? Are we ready to work and die for Him? Do we want Him with heart and soul? Have we a burning desire for Him alone? If so, He is ready for us. He is here alone. He is face to face with us. If you have eyes of Divine Love, see Him. Behold Him within and without and all around you.

'Eyes have they yet, they see not,' is a beautiful saying of the Lord Christ.

Oh Dear Beloved Brothers and Sisters! Let us utilise our eyes now in beholding the Almighty Truth or God. These eyes are not given for nothing. This life is not given for fretting, worrying and wasting over temporary things of the world. It is given by the Almighty, so let us dedicate it only for the service of the Almighty God.

Never mind the past, let it be buried. From this moment let us have our beings in God alone. With God we are everything and without God we are nothing. So let us work, move and have our beings only in Him. Let us not confine our all-pervading God to temples and churches. My Dear Brothers and Sisters of America! I hear that your time is very precious. You may not have time to spare to go to churches and temples. So face Him everywhere. Feel Him here, see Him in your nearest and dearest ones. For, He is in all eyes, in all ears, in all minds and He is all in all.

Nothing exists except Him. As such, try to see Him both in your friends and in your foes. Try to see Him in your dear ones and foreign ones. Do not confine the Almighty God to a name and form. Verily He is nameless and formless. So see Him in all your acts. Let every act of thine be a dedication to Him. Thus every act and work becomes sacred unto us. Everything belongs to Him. Everything and everyone is from Him. So let us offer our everything only unto the service of the Almighty, in every second of our lives.

Thus, we feel God's presence so very near us. We need not run after Him. He is here and everywhere. We need not seek and search for Him, for He is omnipresent. How close is God to us! Whether we are conscious of it or not, of how un-separately ore we are with the Almighty Truth or God. May all of you strive to live ever in this united oneness, is the only prayer of this little brother of yours.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! As you have given me a little place in your tender hearts, may I request you, repeatedly again and again, to live in God and to help others to live in Him. Only then can I call myself thy worthy brother. If you are different from me in thoughts and deeds, how can I call myself a brother of thine?

Dear Brothers and Sisters, let me add also that selling of spiritual knowledge is considered as a heinous crime by all great Masters of every Nation or Religion. A man of realisation never barter with money; he never charges fees for initiations. Neither does he accept presents, for he is a living Self. What will he do with money or gifts?

Whenever we see mercantile business combined with spiritual matters we should stand aloof, for the real Initiation is not for sale. One who to sell God is a deluded hypocrite, trying to lead the blind and innocent into darkness and ignorance. For he himself is blind and ignorant. By attaching ourselves to such persons and institutions weakness and degeneration will be the inevitable result, but never the realisation of the Self.

If we desire God-consciousness, we must go to such a place where we can get it as freely as the air we breathe and the sunshine that we enjoy. We can only get this from High Souls or Sages of the inner Life. They have risen from every kind of illusion or delusion of the world and momentary life.

Dear devoted ones, do not believe and run after any mystical organisations, or secret doctrines, or occult societies if you are caring or wishing for God the living Truth. God is not a Mystic hiding in mysteries and indulging in secrets. God is all-pervading and ever-manifesting. As such His religion is not hidden in a secret vault or doctrine. It is an open fact and a Living Truth.

Let us remember our Lord's Holy words again, '*Eyes have they but they see not.*' If you have eyes for God you will certainly behold Him in and out of everything. He is not a mystery monger nor a magician, deluding and deceiving the people. He is the Lord of Love and the only Living principle or Eternal Truth. Indeed, nothing else exists except God. He alone exists as all in all. He is both within and without. He is everywhere and as such, see Him in everything and face Him in everyone.

Only feel for God and in that great desire for Him you will forget all else, all that is unreal, provided that your desire is a burning desire coming from the inner core of your heart. Where there is no other desire, you are face to face with the Almighty God. Verily you are in God and God is in you.

Then what is it that is obstructing you from seeing God? It is your desires that are coming between you and God. Rise above desires of every kind. Thus you should be progressing instead of wasting your precious time and energy in groping in darkness and mystery mongering.

Dear Beloved Brothers and Sisters, as such may I request you not to confine yourselves to any narrow sect or any particular creed. Do not be bound even to our Holy Mariya Ashram. What I mean is this: as Divine Truth, as Living Principle and as all-pervading Divinity, you should never be bound by limitations, to forms and names.

By this I am not suggesting to you to run after every one who calls himself a Master, a teacher, or a lecturer, forgetting the Living Self that is ever in you. Dear Devoted Ones, you may accept Truth from anyone, but never at the risk of killing thy nearest Self or God. Always live in God at all times and accept all that is Truth from every side. However, do not run restlessly and feverishly after others. By doing so you hide the Truth that is within you. You forget the God that is ever lying near to you and neglect the Divinity that is ever one with you.

How ignorant a mother must be that searches over hills and dales for her baby, when all the while she is carrying the baby on her bosom! When the baby is with her, why should she search far and wide, wasting her precious life? In the same way, why should you waste your precious energies in searching for God where He is not? At the same time you neglect Him where He really is. In that way you can never find Him even though you search for ages and ages.

Pray, stop in your blind search and vain wanderings! Look within, merge within, enter into the innermost recesses of your heart. Dive deep into your own inner Self. For there He is, patiently waiting for you with open arms. Pray, embrace Him. Please do not leave Him, for my sake or for your sake. Do not neglect nor forsake Him again even for a moment.

May your joy consist only in your united Oneness with the Almighty! He is the life of your lives, the spirit of your spirits and the Divinity of Divinities.

So Dear Beloved Ones, if there is even a spark of love left in your devoted hearts to this brother of yours, I request you to show it practically. Live in God and help others also to live in God. Is there any other greater ideal in this life than realising and helping our Brothers and Sisters to also realise God? May the Almighty, the Father of all religions and nations, give you all strength and perseverance to serve Him and thus finally to merge in Him.

Dear Sisters and Brothers, my message will be incomplete if I fail to thank you with my hearty love and gratitude for the great success and achievements of Sri Mariya Ashram. You have brought them about by your sympathy and co-operation towards its progress, the Holy work started by my dear Mother Mariya Iona and Brother Entriiken.

I beg to be allowed to end my tiny message by wishing long life and Peace unto all of you and to our Beloved President and our worthy Secretary of Sri Mariya Ashram.

Again, may God bless you all with never ending peace.

OM SHANTI, SHANTI, SHANTI!

THE HOLY CROSS AND ITS LIVING MESSAGE

My Beloved Mother Mariya has kept for me a Holy Cross, expecting that I too may be in need of it in any minute when the occasion arises. Today when I awoke from my bed, irresistibly I went to the foot of the Holy Cross and bowed my head, touching it in deep adoration.

Is this the Cross of my beloved Christ? No, this is my own cross. The Cross of Holy Christ is with Him alone. Verily, everyone is provided with his own cross and he has to bear it silently for himself. The Holy Cross represents innocence, purity and resignation. Is my own cross also representing the same high ideals? Or is my cross represents egoism and pride in external life?

Oh Lord Jesus! Let me bear also my own cross with Divine love and adoration towards Thee. May I ever have Thy Holy Cross as a symbol of selflessness and sacrifice. Let me be fully resigned unto Thy Holy will. Let me have no desires of my own. Let my only desire be to merge in Thee eternally.

My Sweet Lord, I pray unto Thee never to allow a hard word or an unpleasant thought to come through these lips of mine, neither in honour nor disgrace, neither in joy nor in sorrow, nor in all my tests and trials. Oh my beloved Lord, when I remember Thy Holy Cross, the tears flow profusely with joy, loving oneness. When I behold my Holy Cross, which is in front of me, I remember this body consciousness no more. When I touch this Holy Cross of mine, I feel I am offering this worthless body also as a sacrifice at the altar of Truth.

Oh Lord! Take away this body and let it be consecrated at Thy Holy Feet, on Thy Holy Cross. Oh lord, take away this mind and let it be saturated with a spark of Thy Holy Love and innocence. Oh God my Lord Jesus, take away this tiny intellect and little ego or 'I' and let them be consumed in Thy Holy Consciousness.

Oh Holy Lord, why is this body and this little consciousness still existing? Oh God, make me fully worthy of Thee by placing this body also on my Holy Cross, which is already ready for me lying near at hand.

Whenever there is individuality in me I am away from my cross. When I am filled with universal consciousness rising above the little 'I,' then surely I am residing on the throne of my Holy Cross. Oh Lord! Save me from this body, mind and world and thus make me fully worthy of Thee in thought, word and deed.

My dear Holy Cross, may I not be separated from Thee either in death or life and either in glory or resurrection. May I be ever one, inseparably one with Thee, dear sweet cross of mine.

May the will of the Almighty, who is both within and without, and who is ever one without a second and who is eternally one with us, be done. May His will be done, and may Peace be unto one and all! May Glory be unto Thee, my dear Holy Cross.

OM SHANTI OM!

THE MESSAGE OF SPIRIT

Sri Mariya Ashram

Are you the Spirit or Matter? What a simple question! Even a child could answer it. It is easy to answer but very difficult to stand by the answer.

Even an ignorant man rebels to admit that he is only mere lump of flesh. Still, from the most refined to the most intellectual philosopher, everyone seems to live, act and believe as if they are only these physical sheathes of flesh and nothing more.

It is an open truth that we are never these forms of flesh but the Spirit of Immortality. If we are the changeless Spirit, why this mad rush, this worry and hurry and this break-neck speed? Is not the Spirit all rest and Peace?

Can there be misery or pain in the Eternal Spirit? It is free from all changes and modifications. It is the attachment to the flesh which is the real cause of all pains, sorrows and miseries. Reliance on the body makes us helpless and miserable. And reliance on the Spirit makes us strong and happy.

When we believe that we are the Spirit, why should we cling to the ever changing body? Perhaps our belief is not real. It may be on the surface. We believe intellectually and not practically. Hence, we are surrounded on every side with manifold pains, failures and miseries.

Let us spend a minute to analyse our own lives now. Let us be ashamed of the surface lives and outer beliefs. If we have real faith in our Spirit, why should we live always as these momentary bodies? Why should we identify ourselves with a name of Miss or Mister or Mrs? Can we be contented with these outer names, being the Spirit or Truth?

The glorious sun cannot be hidden by a mere speck of a cloud. Let us not hide the truth any longer. Let us understand the Spirit, as Spirit even now, not theoretically but practically in our heart of hearts. There is much of theory in the world; what we need is a little of practise.

So let us assert our Spiritual consciousness. Let us rise above the body with the help of the Spirit, in all Glory. Let us not bury any longer our Divinity and suffer the consequences of the same in the form of untold miseries and failures.

If we can take hold of our Divine birthright, if we can live and stand by it, we are already free. As Spirit what can bind us? what can make the Spirit miserable or unhappy? Can Spirit ever be decreased or lessened? It is above decrease and increase.

As Divine Spirit we are all Peace, we are all strength, we are all bliss. We are ever free. We are free in the past, we are free in the present. We are free in the future. We are always free, in spite of the momentary pains or miseries of the world.

Oh, the Glory of this freedom! how can I express to you in cold words? Pray, try to feel it for yourselves. Lay aside, even for the time being, your attachments to all forms and names, and feel that you are nothing but the Eternal Spirit. As Spirit nothing can bind you. Shake off your fancies. Arouse yourselves from your long slumbers and vain imaginations. Wake up the sleeping lion of Divinity.

Whether in the past, present or future, you are always the Spirit. Being the Spirit why grovel in helplessness and misery? It is the forgetfulness of your Divinity that makes you feel weak and sinful. Even amidst the seeming sins of the world, remember that you are nothing but the Spirit. Let the sun of Glory wash away all ignorance and darkness. Can Infinity ever be bound by the finite things of the world?

The sun is seen amidst the thick clouds of darkness. So art thou the same Spirit, both in rain and sunshine. All that you need is to take a firm hold of your Spirit, which is never separate from you. You are everything with the Spirit.

As Spirit, is not everything within you? Pray merge within for a second and feel practically. As Spirit, is it not weakness to fall sick or ill? Stand by Spirit, both in health and disease. Nothing can touch Spirit.

As the all-pervading Spirit, is it not ignorance to be bound to a particular creed or religion, or even to a nation or race? The Spirit is all in all. There is nothing beside the Spirit to bind it. Everything and everyone is bound by Spirit and the Spirit cannot be bound, as it is Infinite or One without a second.

Or, if you can understand your own Spirit what necessity is there for these long prayers? If you can have real belief in your Spirit, what necessity is there for these steady concentrations? If you can only live as Spirit, in all your deeds and thoughts, what necessity is there for these silent meditations?

As Spirit are you not already free? When you are eternally free, why fetter thyself with prayers and meditations? These are for those who believe in their gross bodies. These are for those who have no firm belief in their Spirit. Indeed, as a body you are to pray and meditate for attaining the Spirit. However, when once you believe and feel that you are always the Spirit, what necessity is there for you with these finite practices?

Verily, Spirit does not require any prayers or contemplations. As Spirit we are all in all. We can exclude none! We are embracing all. There are neither friends or foes in the Spirit. The nearest ones are as near as the farthest or foreign ones. Spirit cannot be divided, for it is Universal Love, pervading from the atom to the sun.

As Universal Love or Spirit, we are not slaves to any work. We are the masters of all works. We are not bound by life-sucking duties or heavy responsibilities. All work is mere play for us. We play in Spirit as emblems of Spirit.

As Spirit, we behold the same Spirit within and without. All around it is nothing but the Spirit. Oh, if we could only know and feel that we are the same Spirit and never the matter! Then we would not fail to behold the same Divinity in one and all.

Oh, the Glory of facing the Spirit in every face we meet! Oh, the joy of filling our very homes with the consciousness of the Spirit! The ecstasy of recognising only the presence of the living Spirit in all the dear and near ones is simply inexpressible. This is practical religion. This is real life.

Everyone is fond of life. Yet how few are working for eternal life? Eternal life is never in the finite body. It is only in the Infinite Spirit. So let us manifest the one God-head, the forgotten freedom by, being true both in word and thought.

If we are not the matter, then let us live as Spirit, never confining ourselves to a time, place or name. Let all of us repeat, *"I am the Spirit, the body cannot bind me as I am the Master of the body. As Spirit I am the controller of the very mind. Even the world cannot bind me for I am the Ruler of*

the world. As Spirit I have no rival and I have no second. No pain or sin or darkness can dare to touch me. As Divine Spirit I exalt myself in living as Universal Love, loving all as part an parcel of my very own self."

When Truth is so simple and plain, we make it complicated by our complex living and attachments to the flesh. We are neglecting and forsaking the life-giving Spirit, which is inseparably within all of us. The easiest remedy for all sins and ills of life of the flesh, is to lift ourselves from the plane of physical and gross to the plane of Truth and Spiritual.

Here alone is the salvation of individuals or universals as a whole. Hands be off the ever changing phenomena of the gross flesh or matter! Let the mind be merged and dissolved in the glory of Spiritual consciousness.

As a body, there is continuous and never-ending strife, worry, hurry and misery. However, as the Loving Spirit there is Eternal Peace, bliss, strength and happiness. As we are always and forever nothing but the Spirit, let us live in every moment of our lives, as Spirit and as Spirit alone.

May we all live as Spirit in Spirit. For, we are Spirit. As Spirit is our only birthright, it is ever vibrating health, Peace and Divinity all around us.

May we work, breathe and live ever having our being in the Holy Spirit alone! This is the unceasing prayer of the loving Spirit of your brother Omkar.

For the common good of humanity.