

Is Sainthood Possible Today?

Dr. M.W. Lewis

San Diego, 7-26-53

“Is Sainthood Possible Today?” is the subject this morning.

Let us first ascertain, if possible, just what sainthood is, just what is expected of us if we are to be saints, so to speak, or practice sainthood, in these modern times. I have a definition, which I think points out, clearly, what is expected of those who would live the lives of saints: “Living a sanctified, consecrated, holy, Godly, or upright life, such a one is a saint,” that is one who lives that sort of a life, “a sanctified, Holy, and sacred life.” Now by sacred, we mean consecrated; a consecrated life.

Now, the requisites of sainthood are just those, that we live that sort of a life, a sanctified life. That is, one made holy, free from sin, is one who is sanctified. How to do this? We can be sanctified only when we conform to the Divine Standard. Now, that certainly is not found in worldly consciousness. And so, to be sanctified, we must be one with the Divine Consciousness within us, in which is the Divine Standard. And we can do this by God-communion. That’s the first requisite – a sanctified life.

And now we come to a “holy life.” One who leads a holy life is worthy of veneration, of reverence. They are an example of virtue, of piety, of holiness. Now, to lead this sort of a life we must, surely, be acceptable to God – God must have accepted us. We must have that God-contact, then, He responds to us. Such is holiness – a requisite of sainthood.

And then, finally, we come to a “consecrated life.” A consecrated life means a life in the service of God. Now, that just not, does not mean, just lip service; but it means real service to God. And when you are serving God, you are, when you perform real service for Him, you are giving people some of Him. You are giving Him the contact with Him – not just saying: “Lord, Lord, Lord,¹” and doing works in the church and so forth. But by your contact with God, your union with Him, you are giving people God. That’s real service to God. That’s one of the greatest requisites of sainthood.

¹ Luke 6:46, “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”

This is nicely explained in the Bhagavad Gita.² I'd like to read just a bit from the 18th Discourse the 60th, 68th Line. Remember, union with God is the goal of life. And if you can give that to a person, you are performing the greatest service that you can do. And so, it says here: "He who shall declare this supreme secret among My devotees, having shown the highest devotion for Me, without doubt he shall come to Me."

Now, "he who shall declare" does not mean, as I have said, he who shall just say "Lord, Lord," or "God is watching over you." It doesn't mean that at all. It means that you reveal God to that person; that you give part of yourself, the realization that you have of oneness with God, you give part of the Holy Spirit to that person. That's real service for God. You give part of your Spiritual Force to that person. You can see the difference between ordinary service to God and consecration to God's work. If you are one with Him and have the contact and are acceptable to Him, then you can give part of His Great Spiritual Consciousness to others.

And so, he goes on to say: "Nor is there any among men who perform (*sic*) dearer service to Me than he, nor any other shall be more beloved by Me on earth than he."³ That's what Jesus meant when he said, "who touched the hem of my garment?"⁴ (*Sic*) When you really serve God, you give God to someone, and a part of yourself, a part of His Presence in you, as the Holy Spirit, the Holy Vibration goes to that person. And so, there we have the requisites of sainthood: that we live, exemplify, a sanctified, holy, consecrated life.

But there is one more definition, which I have found, which perhaps is more informative than this preceding definition. It is this: A saint is especially one regenerated, and sanctified, made holy, and consecrated. Now most of the previous requisites – sanctification, holiness, and consecration – we have discussed. But this point here, especially, one regenerated, regenerated – and I find the definition for "regeneration" religiously is this: to cause to be, be, to be Spiritually born again – to cause to be Spiritually born again. That's the greatest requisite of sainthood. And if you are regenerated into the Presence of God, into His Consciousness, then you can, without question of a doubt, live sainthood, right here and now, today.

² The Bhagavad Gita or The Lord's Song, Translated by Dr. Annie Besant, 1939.

³ *Ibid*, 18th Discourse, 69th Line, "Nor is there any among men who performeth dearer service to Me than he, nor any other shall be more beloved by Me on earth than he."

⁴ Luke 8:45, "And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?"

There is that reference in the Bible, which I repeated so many times to you, but which I will repeat again. In Titus, the 3rd Chapter, the 5th Verse: “Not by works of righteousness which we have done shall ye be saved, but according to his mercy by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.⁵” (*Sic*) It is that which will save us. It is that which will lift us from outward consciousness into the Spiritual Presence of God. That is regeneration; that is to be Spiritually, born again. If you do that, then you can serve God. You can give, you can give part of Him to people. That’s real service.

Also in Matthew, this is what it says. The 7th Chapter the 21st Verse: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.⁶” Only, only when you are regenerated once more into the Presence of God can you do His Will.

And so, those are the ones who can practice sainthood, who will be regenerated by the techniques, by the meditation of Self-Realization, which have been given by one of the greatest saints in our time, Paramahansa Yogananda; by that you can be regenerated, you can be Spiritually, born again. And then practicing sainthood, you can give a little bit of God to others that they may be lifted, and they, too, may follow and be resurrected, regenerated, be Spiritually born again.

Now, going on a little bit, to elaborate the life of a saint. A saint is one in whose life is held a message of beauty, and a message of hope. The saint does not conform to outward consciousness; he does not accept this consciousness of the ordinary needs of everyday life as paramount. He does not accept the paradoxes of life, which we see right before us – when we see the injustices of life, those near to us are taken away – but he sees beyond that into the Higher Law, into Eternity, whereby everything is rectified, everything must be right. And so, his vision, his life is full of hope, full of beauty. Why? Because he sees just beyond this ordinary life; he has a broader vision; he sees into the future. He puts his faith in the realization of Eternal things, not ordinary worldly things. That is what the life of a saint will do. That is what our lives will do, if we practice sainthood.

⁵ Titus 3:5, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;”

⁶ Matthew 7:21, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”

Also, a saint first believes, first believes, and then proves what Jesus said, "...My kingdom is not of this world..."⁷ "...My kingdom is not of this world..." He believes that, and then proceeds to prove it. How? By lifting his consciousness from outward things, from worldly things, which pass away – worldly consciousness in which we find so many injustices. We cannot rectify them in outward consciousness. But, if we lift our consciousness into the Presence of God, then, no matter how great the troubles, no matter how deep the sorrow, in God's Great Presence it will be consummated as Great Joy. Now that's what the saint does. He lives in the kingdom of heaven while here on earth, by putting his faith, not in material things, passing things, but in Eternal things. And he attains that by realization of his oneness with God.

In Ephesians, I have a reference, which I'd like to give at this time, which clearly points that out. We have been discussing that in the Thursday night meetings, and it's most wonderful. It says, "For he is our peace..."⁸ that means the Presence of God within us, the Christ Consciousness. "...he is our peace, who hath made both one..." both outward consciousness, in which we find these paradoxes, and inner Consciousness of God, He has merged them together so there is one Consciousness of Peace, in spite of all the heartaches, and all the paradoxes. Such is the Power of God.

Then it goes on to say: "He (*sic*) hath broken down the middle wall of partition..." that is "between us."⁹ The middle wall of partition is simply that firmament that is God has placed between outward consciousness and His Own Presence. Spoken of in Genesis, he placed a firmament between the waters above and the waters below.¹⁰ That is simply, we're in a grosser vibration in outward consciousness. We cannot see beyond. But, if we lift our consciousness into the Finer, Finer Vibration of the Presence of God within us, then both become one.

And it says, so beautifully, in the last passage in this 2nd Chapter of Ephesians in the 15th Verse it says: "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one

⁷ St. John 18:36, "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

⁸ Ephesians 2:14, "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;"

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Genesis 1:6-7, "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." "And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so."

new man...¹¹ If we follow and lift ourselves into the Christ Consciousness, if we really consecrate our lives, then we find that this dual personality of ourselves, so to speak, this dual being – one of outward consciousness, completely separated from God; and the other, in our special moments of intuition we feel oneness with Him – God, by His Infinite Power, makes of twain, one new saint, one new consecrated being.

That is absolutely true. And Self-Realization techniques and meditations, because they are sent as a special dispensation from God, will enable each and every one of us to do that. You will find, subtly, and wonderfully, that you are changed from a dual person, into one new Spiritual being. When you have that, then you can live sainthood; and that can be done right here and right now.

Now going on, we might ask this question, “What raised these great saints which we read about, what raised them to the state of sainthood?” It is this. They extricated themselves from a simple life of humanity, with all its troubles, with all its paradoxes, as I have said. They did that, and they reached the heights in spite of those things. That’s what makes them saints. That’s all. And it is their untiring struggle and effort which give us the inspiration, as they did this very thing.

And finally, by doing this, by lifting themselves up, they obliterated that pessimism. This is the important point. They obliterated that pessimism which comes from material disbelief. You see these things happening around you; you become pessimistic, and you well can do that. But the saints, by their untiring efforts to extricate themselves from a lowly human being state into a status of a child of God, they have given a great optimism. They’ve given us inspiration by their untiring efforts.

And so, they have showed that they have a, they have shown that they are not bound by lower laws. This is an important thing. But they have lifted themselves up into the Higher Laws of God. And they have proved, that they, and all who follow them, they and all who follow them, are essentially Divine. That is what makes us saints. If we do that, if we follow the great saints – follow one like the Master, who has given the technique and the ways whereby they can do these things, if they follow him – then sainthood is possible, right now, for each and every one of us, because you know Jesus said, one of the greatest

¹¹ Ephesians 2:15, “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;”

things, he said, "These things that I do ye shall do and greater things because I go unto my Father."¹² (Sic) Yes, each and every one of us, if we will, can, right here and now, live the life of a saint; we can practice sainthood.

In Genesis, the 1st Chapter, the 26th Verse, as I have said, the saints have shown that essentially we are not bound by lower laws – physical laws – but we are Divine. We are bound only by God's Law, to do His Will, and it says just that, just that in Genesis the 1st Chapter, the 26th Verse: "And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth..."¹³

Man has dominion over all things. Not with outward consciousness. No. We see that. We see the injustices of this war and so forth; where the boys have to go to war. No. There is no dominion in that consciousness. But when he lifts himself from outward consciousness into the Divine Consciousness within, then he has dominion over all things, because he merges himself in the Presence of God. And, if God is Omniscient, and controls the Power of Universe upon Universe, so the humble devotee, who becomes a saint, merges in God's Great Presence, and likewise, he has the Power, and the Strength, and the Omniscience of God Himself.

And so, it says: "He shall have dominion...over all the earth...over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."¹⁴ (Sic) And so, we should remember that we are not just small human beings, pushed here, and pushed there. No. We are children of God. The only thing we have to prove, and know it, we have to know that we are His children.

Now, someone said, "What is the good of saints?" What good are they? What good do saints do? From a little personal experience...I used to come to the Master many times, all upset, all in a whirl, mind this way and that way. And I'd come to him, and I'd come in his presence, and soon I'd find all that turmoil and restlessness disappeared. Why? Because he was a saint, and he had that power to give a little of God's Great Omniscience and Peace to those who came in his presence.

¹² St. John 14:12, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

¹³ Genesis 1:26, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

¹⁴ Ibid.

I used to come to him with a list of questions that long – all my troubles listed all down. What a mess I was; everything. And I'd come in; "I'm gonna find out from him;" "I'm gonna see, get the answer to these things." And I'd come in his presence, and I'd forget all about the questions. Why? Because my Soul got what it wanted. It wanted Peace, it wanted Union with God. And he being a saint, whose life was consecrated and holy, One with God, by his power, by the Power of God flowing through him, when I'd came in his presence, then everything was removed. All the inhibitions were taken away, and the Peace of God flowed naturally, as it should.

And so, the saints can do this. As someone has said, the answer to that question, "What good are the saints?" is this – "They delight the Soul." They delight the Soul – that optimism which they have, as the Master used to have, that buoyancy, that optimism. He had that. Why? Because he was regenerated through God-contact, and when you came into his presence, you felt, you felt that Great Presence of God, your own Self, that's all. And, for a moment, you were one with that Divine part of yourself. And so, the saints really are worth something. As this gentleman has said, "They delight the Soul." It gives the Soul what it wants. It wants the Peace; it wants once more, the Union with God.

And so in closing, sainthood is absolutely possible today. Sainthood is possible, if you follow the meditations and the techniques of Self-Realization Fellowship, because they have been given as a special dispensation by one of the great saints of God. If you follow those meditations and techniques, you prepare yourself that God may come into you, that you may feel your oneness with Him, that your life will be consecrated, will be holy, will be sanctified. You prepare yourself. God cannot come in if your life is a turmoil. No. How can He? But, if through regular effort, and devotion to Him, following one who knows God, as the Master knows God, then you prepare yourself that God can come in. Then sainthood is possible.

Last night we had a meditation at the hermitage in honor of the Great Babaji; one of the greatest saints; one of the saints who directs other saints. One whom, as Lahiri Mahasaya said, if you utter his name with devotion, "O Babaji," with devotion, immediately great Spiritual strength comes.¹⁵ Such is a saint. And so,

¹⁵ Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramhansa Yogananda, First Release 1946, (available, free, on the internet), Chapter 33, "Whenever anyone utters with reverence the name of Babaji," Lahiri Mahasaya said, "that devotee attracts an instant spiritual blessing."

we meditated there at the hermitage in his honor, and we came prepared, through Self-Realization, to receive his great Spiritual upliftment.

And so, the techniques of Self-Realization will give you the way whereby you can contact God. Contact God and then become consecrated, sanctified, and made holy. Nothing else will make you holy. Not the good works you do – only the Presence of God. And that will do it, instantaneously, if you can somehow get into His Presence. Self-Realization does give you the way whereby you can immediately enter into the Presence of God.

Now it should be easier. Jesus said, “these things ye shall do and greater things.¹⁶” (*Sic*) That was 2,000 years ago. Since then we have Spiritually evolved, according to the law of evolution. It is easier now. But it is also easier because of the special dispensation which God has sent through one of His most beloved saints, Paramhansa Yoganandaji. We have a special dispensation whereby all who will, all who will, can contact God, and, therefore, practice sainthood.

Now 50 or 60 years ago there was a concentrated effort, when one other great saint came to America, to have unity of people, theoretically. They were trying to unify the different religions of the world, 50 or 60 years ago. But right now, right now, it is possible to absolutely unify all the religions, and attain the Universality of Religion through realization, and that’s what Self-Realization gives you. It gives you the practical methods, whereby, through Self-Realization, without question of a doubt, you can absolutely be one with God, contact Him, feel Him in your presence; then, you will be consecrated, sanctified, and made holy. And so, sainthood is absolutely possible today. The Self-Realization techniques will take you into the Presence of God, will take everyone who will, who will follow; because it is a special dispensation, remember, of God.

Finally, sainthood is possible today for each and every one of us who will, because we are children of God, made in His Image, and we essentially are Divine.

¹⁶ Ibid, St. John 14:12