

Reflections in Life

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Our subject this morning: "Reflections in Life," "Reflections in Life."

We can begin right off and ask ourselves this question, whether we think God is running this Show, or we think we think we are; or that we are getting unnecessarily involved in the running of this Play. God is the Sole Doer. He is behind all action, and, if we could but realize that, and contact Him, know Him, then we would reflect the calmness and the peace of friendship with Him, which would be manifested in our outward life.

If we could but realize, that God is the Doer, and that man can do absolutely nothing – He lets us think we can do a little bit about this Drama of Life – but when you come right down to it, you can do very little. As Jesus said, "Who can change his stature?" God is the Doer, and as soon, or, rather, as soon as we realize that, and give Him the load, give Him the responsibility, it'll be much easier for us. And so, that reflection, which comes from those who have found that out, that know that God is the Doer, they reflect that Peace and Serenity of His Presence, which they have, and life becomes quite bearable, in spite of injustices and paradoxes.

So, understand, our attitude comes from our inner consciousness. We live in this outward world. We have this outward consciousness, but we also have an inner consciousness, which is far more important than the consciousness of this world, this worldly consciousness, because it is that which determines our activity, and our purpose in life, and how we reflect that inner consciousness, which should be communion with God within each and every one of us. If we have that, we will reflect it. If we do not have it, we will not reflect it. And, if we have that oneness with God, our attitude is entirely different from the attitude of those who are attached to outward consciousness, with its uncertainty. If you realize that you can see what your attitude should be, it should come from oneness with the Presence of God within, and His Peace and His Love, if that flows through you, the world seems different. And, if it does not, the world seems entirely something else.

And so, realize, that we reflect our inner world of consciousness. Understand that some people have a strong mind, and strong consciousness. They reflect that in their outward living and attitude by forceful living. You take the "captains of industry," they have a strong mind, and they are forceful in their activity, and they get things done. Now, on the other hand, you take a Christ-like person. Having that inner consciousness, they reflect a saintly life. Why? Because they are one with the Presence of God, and they reflect that in their activity, and the Presence of God shines through them. So our inner activity, our inner state of consciousness, is very important. And, if we but understand that, then we will know what state of inner consciousness to maintain, and keep dynamic to our own needs and consciousness.

Now, why does the Christ-like person reflect the saintly life? Because he has oneness with God and God's Great Love. He sees that in outward living, in spite of the discrepancies of this world, and what goes on in this world. That's the wonderful thing. Although the world will never give us satisfaction, although the world will never come up to what we hope it would come up to, but if we feel the Presence of God, in spite of that, in spite of that, we can reflect His Love within us. And then we will go on, play our part in the world, without being crushed, so to speak, by its injustices, which we see all the time going on about us.

As the [Bhagavad] Gita said, "All men walk the earth wholly deluded." Then in the next line or two it says, but, "Arjuna, get out of my delusion." And we can get out of it, because the Presence of God is in each and every one of us, and we have the ways and the means to get out of this delusion, if we but make the effort, and realize that there's no difference between us and the One Father. Our consciousness is His Consciousness. But there's a veil there. There's a separation. And so, we, as intelligent human beings, should remove the separation, by following one who had removed the separation, as the Founder of Self-Realization Fellowship. He had removed it. He lived in God. He was with God. He is our example. He has left his teachings. Why not follow them? Why not follow one who had attained oneness with God?

Now let us, for instance, consider the effect others have upon us who are depressed. You know, what do they call them – "wet blankets," or something like that. Well, they meet you, and immediately the whole world seems lost. No hope for anything. They're so depressed. And what happens? We, seeing that state of consciousness, unless we are on our guard, unless we are reinforced

tremendously by the Presence of God within us, we pick up that state of consciousness, and the world seems awful dark.

I have told you I'm sure, but I must tell it again, because I get quite a thrill out of it. A man who used to come to my office for many years; he was a very good man, but he was depressed, inside. He used to come in with his face all screwed up, and I'd say, "How are you this morning, Mr. Jones?" "Terrible, Doctor, terrible, terrible," and right off I'd begin to feel depressed – horrible. And, if I wasn't careful, the whole, the day would be spoiled. Why? Because he was depressed; he reflected what he had within him. That depressed state.

And so, each and every one of us reflects, that which is within us. Why not have the Presence of God? Why not have friendship and oneness with Him, and reflect that? Why be depressed by this consciousness of delusion? Why let it make an inroad into our Divine Consciousness, which we are? Why not feel the Presence of God, and reflect that? You'll not only help yourself, but you'll help everyone with whom you come in contact. "Nobody likes," as Master used to say, "a wet blanket. They spoil everything. That's their inner state, and so they reflect it."

And so, some people, some people are calm, and collected, and they reflect that. You know them. They come to you, and you feel lifted up. You feel, well, at least, life is worth living. Others come, and they're in a hustle and bustle. They're depressed, and they're creating disturbance all the time; either in their consciousness, or with, in those people with whom they come in contact. They're always disturbed, always causing confusion, and you feel what they are inside. They're restless, always in a rush, always disturbed; like the young fellow who came tearing down the slip to the ferry boat, and there was an open stretch of water, and he made a flying leap over, and landed on the deck of the ferry boat. And he picked himself up, and he said, "Well," he says, "I made it." The deck hand says, "What's your hurry Mister, this boat was coming in." So those are the people that are always creating a disturbance, whether it's necessary, or not. Many people live in that.

These two ladies were talking in the backyard. One said to the other, she said, "John and I were married by a justice of the peace." The other one says, "Really," she says, "by the noise we heard coming from your house the other night, we thought you were married by the Secretary of War." So those are the kind of people who are restless inside, if they're, and they create disturbances. There must have been quite a thing to be married by the Secretary of War.

So, on the other hand, if you're thoroughly stayed in God: "I will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed in thee¹," if you're thoroughly stayed in God, then you reflect that. And then, no matter what comes, nobody can disturb you. No matter what comes. Master used to tell me, he says, "Never lose your calmness." Well, that's some job, but we must do it. "Never lose your calmness."

I remember in the crash of 1929, you, some of you remember it. And what a state of consciousness filled all the people. I remember Master was talking with me, he called me up, and he said, "What's the matter?" he says, "The country's the same. We have the resources; we have all the manufacturing and all the assets of this country. What is the trouble?" The trouble is the consciousness of people has changed. They've lost that faith in one another. And so, we had that great, dark crash.

And so, realize, your state of consciousness, in spite of the crash, in spite of this world with all its troubles, if you have the right state of inner consciousness, if you have made God your friend, and know Him, you will reflect that, and you will help others, and others seeing what you have, may take heart again. We need to do that, because the world is not an easy place in which to live. But, if we feel the Presence of God with us, we reflect that, and others, meeting us, will be helped; and they, in turn, will be better. And they, in turn, will reflect the Presence of God within them. And so, our attitude is very important, and our attitude depends on our inner state of consciousness.

And now, "The world is a looking glass, and gives back to every man the reflection of his own face." That was the quotation by a, a statement by William Thackeray. Realize that, that the world shows you what you are. You reflect your inner state of consciousness, and when you see in outward things, and in people, when you see discrepancies, look in, and change yourself, because the fact you see those discrepancies shows they're in you, and they're in me. And so, our attitude depends on our inner state of consciousness. Let us never forget it.

Now, an important fact in cultivating proper the attitude with its reflections in life is the understanding of the body – the understanding of the body. I know until I had the good fortune to meet the Master in 1920, I had read lots about Hindu philosophy, and different things, and I'd studied the Bible. But, there was

¹ Isaiah 26:3

no satisfaction in it, because I did not understand it. It has to be understood through the Power of the Soul, through the Intuition of the Soul. And, if you do that, if you understand the Bible through the Intuition of the Soul, it will give you an entirely different attitude toward the scriptures, and toward life itself. Now, the Master helped me, very much, to understand the Bible so that I could apply it in my daily living, and, thereby, I hope, reflect what my inner state of consciousness was becoming.

I remember the first time I saw him, went to see him, in Unity House in Boston, and, as I said, Christmas Eve, 1920. And I went in there, I went in skeptical, and I, I know he knew it, but that's all right. We have a right to do that. And I said, "I searched everywhere Sir, but no one can explain these things in the Bible." I'd read Hindu philosophy. I said, "We read about, if thine eye be single, thy body will be filled with light."² And I said, "I've asked many. No one seems to know." And he said these words of Jesus: "Can the blind lead the blind? They both fall into the ditch." They live with ignorance within [Note: sentence may be incorrect. Tape noise.].

And so, when he said that, I felt differently toward him, right off. My attitude was somewhat changed, because he'd quoted Jesus in a way which I understood. So then, I said in true American fashion, "Have you seen those things?" He said, "Oh, I think so." I said, "Do you think I could?" He says, "I think so." And so, after a little bit, I remember, he sat down, he put his head against mine, and a great Spiritual Eye came, right there, immediately. And so, my conception of the Bible and understanding was immediately changed. I could see that the Bible should be read – not word for word, literally – but with the understanding, of the Intuition within us. And after that it was much easier. And so, I remember in the Autobiography [of a Yogi], Master said that Sri Yukteswarji did the same to him – showed him how to read the scriptures. He, being a Hindu, taught me; our Master taught me how to read the Bible.

And so, our attitude depends on, upon our understanding of the scriptures in a, to a great extent. Because in the scriptures of every true religion is the same eternal truth. The Single Eye, the Great Cosmic Sound of Om spoken in all the scriptures, and the Great Feeling of God's Presence, His Great Love, is spoken of, always, as the underlying truth. And so, our attitude will change, if we know that. Whether a person is a Mohammedan, or a Hindu, or a Christian, or a Zoroastrian; we feel differently toward Him when we know underlying all

² Matthew 6:22, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." King James version.

religions is the same eternal truth. And so, I'm very grateful to the Master for helping me that way, and, of course, I try to pass it on. So as to help others, we must have the right attitude.

Now, I have a little reference from the Master's Autobiography I'll give you at this time. I like to give his words, because they say it in such a definite, concrete way that I even like to hear them. Now, Master expounded the Christian Bible with beautiful clarity. He is, He's speaking of his own, Sri Yukteswarji, his own Master: "It was from my Hindu guru, unknown to the roll call of Christian membership, that I learned to perceive the deathless essence of the Bible, and to understand the truth in Christ's assertion –surely the most thrillingly intransigent ever uttered: 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not [pass away]'^{3,4}"

Understanding the Bible means that, if you understand from which state of consciousness Jesus spoke, the Christ Consciousness within him, that will never pass away. Heaven and earth shall pass away. This world will pass away, and heaven will pass away, but the words of Christ Consciousness, which Jesus uttered, and that same Christ Consciousness is in each and every one of us, will not pass away. Knowing that, won't our attitude be changed? Won't we want to attain that? Will we not strive to know that state of consciousness which will survive this world, and heaven itself? We can see how the interpretation of the Bible determines your attitude, and the reflections of that attitude.

Now, another important effect of attitude resulting from God contact is that we affect world conditions, and people around us. You take India, for instance, with its ages behind it. It's Spiritual Treasure has affected many, many people. India has been kept alive. Why? Because of the attitude of its saints; the attitudes of its saints has kept India alive where other civilizations have failed, and have melted away. But India, because of the attitude of her great saints, and many of her peoples, have kept India here with us.

In our own scriptures we read, that, if there were just ten men, these two cities would have been save – ten men – ten good men.⁵ And so, you can see that your attitude, wherein you have God contact, is worth more than, sometimes, as much money, and things that you can give, because it is the Power of God, which is

³ Matthew 24:35

⁴ Chapter 16, Page 176, 1951 Revision

⁵ Genesis 18:16-33

Supreme in this world and in the Universe – nothing else. And so, those two cities would have been saved, if there had been ten good men.

I remember, Master was down to Encinitas one time, Rajarsi was out meditating, as he used to, on his end of the lawn, and the Master saw him, and he spoke to, I think Sister Meera was there, and he said, "Such a man, meditating like that, does more good in the world than many men of industry, and such things." That's the Power of God. And so, we must have that Power of God within us. We must have God contact. Then our attitude will reflect on the living of others, and help this world, and help world conditions. These things are very important.

And so, understand one thing, although we may not think that our consciousness, our attitude, amounts to anything, it does. Because it is the Power of God within His devotees that changes the hearts of men, and the hearts of men will not be changed by anything but God's Love, which is reflected from the hearts of His devotees; and lasting peace will come, only, when the hearts of men are changed by the Presence of God within. And so, you can see it is so important to make God contact. He's the Doer. He's running this whole business. Let Him do it. Let Him use us to reflect, to others, His Great Love. That will change the world more than all our striving in outward consciousness. This is a very important point on attitude and the reflection on your inner state of consciousness.

Now, most of us endeavor to change the world. Not most of us, but some of us, endeavor to change the world, when we should be taken up by changing ourselves. We used to go to the Master, "So-and-so is doing this to me. These people have ganged up on me." He'd say, "Is that so? Who? What?" And we'd tell him. Suddenly he'd say, "Change yourself! Change yourself!" Because you see all those things shows it is in you. So we must change ourselves. But, if we have within ourselves the right attitude, it will be because we have the great attitude of Love for God within us. If we have that, then others will be changed.

We should remember our prayer, "May Thy Love shine forever, on the sanctuary of my devotion, and may I be able, to awaken Thy Love in all hearts." That shows we must have the Love of God in us. We must have Him. Our inner state of consciousness must be oneness with God's Great Love. That'll do more good in the world, if we try, as Master says, to change ourselves. And what will change us in a greater way than anything else? It is God's Love. God's Love is the greatest Force in the Universe. God's Love will change our hearts, and it will

change the hearts of many. That is one of the greatest things, remember, in attitude.

Now, going on a little bit; I think that just having the Love of God within us is the greatest thing. And, if we have that, outer things do not amount to too much. Master says this in his little book, The Master Says. "Some of the monks and sisters of the Self-Realization Order asked Paramhansaji for permission to put aside worldly dress and wear monastic robes. The Master said this. 'What matters is not your clothes but your attitude. Make your heart a hermitage and your robes the Love of God.'" Isn't that wonderful? It's all right, it is necessary for certain robes. I didn't wanna put this robe on, and I said, "Sir, I don't wanna wear it. It's your job." He said, "What's the matter with you?" He says, "If you live the life, then it's fine." I said, "All right, I guess I have to live the life then."

So that's the point. Sometimes it is necessary, but it's what's in the heart that counts. Some of the greatest saints in India, they wear nothing, but in their heart they have the Love of God. And so, Master said "Make your heart a hermitage, and your robe the Love of God."

And so finally, I'll give an illustration of how my attitude was once changed. It was the same first night I met the Master. I went to see him. I've told you about how he showed me the Spiritual Eye. Before he did that, he had a tiger skin, which he brought out and laid on the floor. I went in to see him, skeptically. I wasn't going to be hypnotized, or any such thing, by anyone from India – strange, mysterious persons from India. So I went in, though, and I was on my guard. I had an attitude, and that was it.

So the Master brought out a tiger skin and put it down on the floor. This was before he showed me the Spiritual Eye. And so he said, "Would you sit down on one end?" He says, "I will sit on this end." Well, I had never sat down cross-legged, as I remember, like that. Somehow, I got down there. And he was right in front of me, like this. And I was skeptical. He looked at me, and he says, "Doctor," he says, "Will you always love me as I love you?" "Will you always love me as I love you?" And I looked at him, and the attitude changed. My attitude changed completely, because, somehow, by the Grace of God, I saw what he was; and I felt that Great Love which was flowing through him from the One Eternal Father, and I said, "Yes, I will." From a person that was skeptical, immediately, that's the Power of God's Love. And he seemed so pleased. He rubbed his hands, and said, "Fine, I take charge of your life."

Now I didn't know what was coming. It's been kinda tough discipline. But I'm so happy that I hung on, somehow. He made me promise one thing – that, if he hadn't, I don't know if I'd gone back sometimes. He said, "I want you to promise me one thing – that you will never avoid me." I said, "Certainly," because I felt good. I felt the Presence of God's Love. I said "Surely." If I hadn't promised that, many times, I wouldn't a gone back in, because the discipline was severe. But, by hanging on, and allowing him to give it to me, which I needed, then those skepticisms fell off. And by the Grace of God, I feel God and Master's Presence with me.

Then one other thing; the only other thing he said, which helped to change my attitude completely, was just as we were nearing the end of the meeting. He said, "Now," he says, "Doctor," he says, "If after meditating, and following, has helped you, will you help others to get it?" I said, "Certainly." And that's what I've been doing ever since; trying to help others find the Presence of God within. As the Master was so good to me, I certainly want to be good to others, and give them what I can, to having the right attitude toward others, and respecting, respecting the Presence of God as it flows through me, as it'll flow through all of us. Let us do that.

And so, in closing, we reflect what we are. We have the ways and means of His coming, and knowing that there is no separation between us. And we can say, if we meditate deeply, and are sincere with ourselves, and with God, and with people, we can say, as Lord Shankara said, we will know, without a doubt, there is no separation between us and the One Eternal Father. We will say, with Lord Shankara: "I am He, I am He, Blessed Spirit I am He."