

God's Boatman

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Hollywood, 3-9-58

The subject, as you know this morning, "God's Boatman," which means none other than the Guru.

As I think back over the years since I've had the great privilege of meeting the Master, of course, I remember his great, profound wisdom, his Great Love and such things, but he had one other side, which was very comforting. He had a great humor, and many the time he sat us on the floor rolling around, listening to his stories, and why not? As his Master said, "This religion isn't a funeral procession." And he was like that, and in the little talk, which I'll give you this morning, I haven't much chance to tell a story, so I'm going to tell it in the first place, because I know until I get it off my chest, I'll not be able to tell you much else.

It happened last night. I was thinking laying in bed what I, some little story I could tell, and I have some stories there, but I found this one, and it struck me so funny that I called up Mrs. Lewis on the, what do you call it, in the communication system. And I couldn't find the button, so I was pressing several, and finally a voice answered. I thought it was she, and I said, listen to this, and I told the story, and suddenly this voice said, "Well, who did you want?" I said, "Well, isn't this you, Mildred." No, this is so-and-so over the other side. Well, then I told her, and she got awake enough, and, and she appreciated it, and I says, "I'm sorry to wake you up, I thought it was the other," and she said, "Oh, that's fine," she says, "I hadn't gone to bed anyway."

So then, not finding, getting hold of Mrs. Lewis, I got out of bed and went downstairs. I said, "Listen to this." And this was what I told her. "I wish now," said the lecturer, "to tax your memory." Someone in the audience let out a wail. "Has it come to that?"

But it just, it just stuck me, struck me in a peculiar way "someone let out a wail in the audience. Has it come to that?" So the taxes are really catching up with us. But it certainly brought back to me memories of the Master, and when he really, he'd get you started on a story, he didn't let up until you were on the floor rolling around – and he'd know how to do it, he knew how to do it.

And so our subject this morning, "God's Boatman," refers, of course, to none other than the Guru. The one who comes from God's Great Consciousness, and Compassion, and Love for His children, who bring the lost souls back home to God. And a true Boatman is one who is filled with Compassion that takes no lengths - such was the Master, such was his Great Love. And as a tribute to him on this occasion of his Mahasamadhi, I'd like to read just a little of his poem, "God's Boatman," and in that you will find I'm sure, his wonderful spirit. He says, "I want to ply my boat, many times, Across the gulf-after-death, And return to earth's shores From my home in Heaven; I want to load my boat With those waiting, thirsty ones Who are left behind. And carry them by the opal pool Of iridescent joy Where my Father distributes His all-desire-quenching liquid peace. Oh, I will come again and again! Crossing a million crags of suffering . With bleeding feet, I will come- If need be, a trillion times- So long as I know One stray brother is left behind."

Such was the wonderful spirit of our Master.

"I want Thee, O Lord," - he goes on "That I may give Thee to all. Free me then, O God, From the bondage of the body, That I may show others How they can free themselves. I want Thine everlasting bliss Only that I may share it with others; That I may show all my brothers The way to happiness Forever and forever, in Thee."

There you have a real picture of the Master. Not coming once, but coming eternally until all, all are gathered into the Great Net of God's Love, carried over to the Great Sea of Cosmic Consciousness, far beyond this duality of trouble and delusion in which we find ourselves.

And so, we must realize there's a great difference between teachers and a guru. It is necessary to point this out. When you have, so to speak, vague desires to know the truth, then you are sent teachers, or you read books, or you join societies. But when that Great Desire of the heart comes, when you've reached your limit of endurance of this delusion and really mean business with God, then He sends you one of His Boatman to ferry you across to the Great Sea of Peace and Bliss, and that Boatman is the Guru. And that, that Guru is, or comes to you because of Spiritual Law. It does not just happen. That Guru comes to you in response to your Soul's cry. That comes as a special consideration from God Himself. And that's why we must realize how fortunate we are that somehow we here in this room, and many, many others, are drawn to this path, because millions of people cannot even think of what we're thinking. It does not enter their mind. And so I consider myself, and I know you all do, very fortunate that somehow, by the Grace of God, I had sense enough to listen to the beloved Guru. So realize the difference between the guru, or teachers rather, and the Guru. Remember, when that desire in your

heart is great enough, God responds and sends you a God Conscious man, who is your Guru and the channel to take you back home to God.

And so in Master's own words, "A Guru is a vehicle of God who uses his body, speech, and mind, and spirituality," that's the important thing, "to bring the lost souls back home to their home of Immortality." And so such was our Founder, Paramhansa Yogananda. He founded Self-Realization Fellowship, the Church of All Religions. He did not endeavor to bring all the religions together, but to show us underneath all religions is the one universality of religion, the Great Light and Love of God. Take any one of any of the religions, take the individual person, get him out of the dogma, and creed, and he will see the same Light which you see. That's universality of religion. He will feel the same Love which you feel, because there's only one God, there's only one real religion, and that's God's Love. And irrespective of color, race, or creed, everybody sees the same Light of the Infinite. If they follow the right channel, they feel the Great All- encompassing Love and Protection and Solace of the One Father's Great Love. So that's why the Guru has come. He is the instrument of God, to serve you, and to serve me, by body, mind, speech, and especially spirituality, to bring us back home to God. God has responded to us through this channel.

In other ages there were other gurus, but right now, this is ours. Let us not forget that. We have been drawn to this path, it does not just happen. There's a spiritual reason, and the spiritual reason is that God has responded to us. Let us do our part, take advantage of the opportunity to be out of this delusion and this darkness in which we find ourselves.

And so, using the body, speech, and mind means that the Master's life had one purpose of spirit, to carry you, and carry me, across the sea of darkness and delusion. His Compassion knew no bounds. I remember one instance at the hermitage. We had been waiting for him, and it began to drag on for two or three hours, we were still waiting. Soon he came out and said, "I suppose you're all awful cross with me, but" he said "that soul needed a little help. That soul needed a little help. I had to help him." How could he refuse him? And many times he said, "My life is a ransom for many." When his body was wracked by taking the karma from many people he said, "Well, my life is a ransom for many." Although I hated to hear those words, still I realized how fortunate I was, and all of you are, and all of us are, that somehow it was to be thus, because on the other side there is no pain, no nothing, because those who have those communion with God, those who have Oneness with Him, can be above this outward world of delusion at any moment. But still, still he told me when a saint, a liberated saint, takes on a body, they take on some delusion, they cannot help it. That's why his life was a ransom for many.

“This is a tragic world,” he often said, and we can say it to one another now when we see each other, but there will come a time when we will not see each other. We will not see each other. We will all disappear from this place, and until, through the help of the Infinite Father through, the channel of the Guru, we know God, and know freedom, we will not be out of this delusion. Let us not forget that, because the Gita¹ says, “All men walk the earth wholly deluded.” But it goes on to say, “Get out of My delusion.” There's a way out, and the way out is through the blessings of God, through the channel of the Guru. Let us realize that.

And so, the Guru comes to give his body, his mind, his speech, plus his spirituality. Now the spirituality is the important thing, because the spirituality comes from the Immortal Consciousness of God, which the Guru has, and, therefore, the Guru's presence on earth is not necessary. Please realize that. The Guru's presence on earth is not necessary, because the spirituality of the Guru means the Omniscience of God, which flows through the Master, through the Guru, and that goes beyond this little worldly existence.

And so understand, even though the Guru is not with us, that Immortal Presence of God is with us, and always will be, if we but understand it and know that we are not this little body, but the Great Immortal Presence of God is in us. That's the spirituality which the Guru gives to the humble disciple, which extends beyond this worldly existence into the Eternity of God's Great Presence; His Light and His Love. That's why the Guru is so important. Now you can see the difference between the teacher and the Guru. The Guru gives you God – introduces you to God. The teacher cannot do that. The Guru is appointed by God through Spiritual Law to ferry you, and to ferry me, across the sea of delusion into His Great Light and Love of Spirit.

Now through the spirituality of the guru, three great things are left to you and to me. Realize these three things – remember them. The first is that through the Guru's oneness with the Omniscience of God, he has left these three great things. The first is this, that he has left his teachings and his example for us. He has left his teachings, and what an example he has left for us for he said, “When I am gone what'll take my place – Love and Love alone.” That's the example he has left for us. He has left the way to God. He has left the way to Immortality; he's left the way to freedom from this world of delusion. He set the example by showing us that Love alone would only, only would supersede him when he left this mortal existence. That's the first great thing.

And the second thing is that he has left scientific methods and techniques whereby everyone who will, can know the Omniscience of God which the Boatman enjoys, and can give to others. He has left the ways and the means, the definite techniques, and those who do those techniques will know the same

Omniscient Consciousness which one of God's Boatman, as our beloved Master, knows. That's the second thing.

But the third thing and I think this is the greatest, is the Master's promise to us, and it holds true, because he is an instrument of God, the Voice of Silent God. And I'll just read the Master's promise to you and to me. "Inasmuch," he says, "as you have given me your love, and I have given you my love," - that's the relationship between the Guru and disciple - "Inasmuch as you have given me your love, and I have given you mine, we are gathered together by the Grace of God." This thing does not "just happen." It is God's Grace that brings us together. When millions of people are left out, so to speak, isn't it the Grace of God that does that? Well, the Master says that. Then he says, "God is the head of our family, and I am his son. I am one with the Great Gurus, and Christ, and those that are in tune with me shall see God." Understand it. These are facts, this is true: Those who are in tune with a channel of God – really in tune – as he sees God, so they shall see God. That's the Master's promise to us. And he concludes, "Those that are in tune with me will find that I shall stoop down from heaven to make them realize the Love of my Father."

That's the Guru's promise to us: Three Great things – his teachings, his example, the methods whereby we, too, can enjoy the Great Omniscience of God's Presence – and besides those two things, a promise that he will always be with us. Nothing can part us from the Omniscience of God. While we're struggling along, he will stoop down, if we falter, and lift us once more into the Omniscience of God's Presence. That's what the Guru can do for you. That's what the Guru can do for all of us. That's what the Guru will do for all of us, if we but accept and follow, honestly and sincerely.

Now God's Boatman, your Guru, my Guru, is ordained through Spiritual Law to help you go back home. Once, when Sri Yukteswarji told our Master these beautiful words, and the Master says the same thing to us. He said to him, "I shall be your friend forever, because God asked me to bring you home." Isn't that beautiful? Same relationship with you and your Guru – same relationship with me. I shall be your friend forever, and forever, and forever. Not just in this life, but eternally. Why, because God asked him to bring the Master back home to Him. And that's what the Guru says to each and every one of us. Hope flies, so realize it's so important in this to find the answer. If you really want to find God, you have to find the Channel, and if you find the Channel and follow it, you will surely receive the Omniscience of God as that Channel receives it, because the Channel has only one reason for being here, and that's to bring you, and to bring me, back home to God.

Now self-appointed gurus do not amount to anything. Those which you get from reading books, and from the machinations of your subconsciousness mind, those are not real gurus. A real guru comes

according to the Spiritual Law, as I have pointed out. So do not be sidetracked, but go deep within, and feel the Presence of God, and in that you will know the Channel you should follow – the Reality of God's Existence right within you.

“Thou and I, O Father, never apart; Thou and I never apart; I am Thine, Thou art mine.” That's the relationship of Guru and disciple. The Guru is nothing but the Voice of Silent God, and if you will make that contact through the techniques, you will hear Him, feel His presence, and know He is never apart from you.

Such is the Omniscience of our One Father, who comes to us as our Guru, and has come through the ages as many Gurus in many, many souls. And so the Guru, the Voice of God, comes to serve others, bringing them back home across this lake of delusion, the sea of Maya and darkness.

Now the relationship between the teacher and disciple is one thing, but the relationship between the Guru and disciple is another thing. The relationship between the teacher and the pupil is one thing. The relationship between the Guru and disciple is another thing, because it is based on one thing – it is based on unconditional understanding; unconditional understanding. One day your friends are with you, the next day, if you don't look out, they're against you, and so is everybody else, it seems. But with the Guru, he never changes, because that relationship is based on an unconditional understanding, based on the Unconditional Love of God. That's what does it. That's what it is - God's Great Love is behind, and underneath, and supporting your relationship with your Guru based on Divine Love. Divine Love does not change. So realize that the underlying basis of your relationship with God, through the Channel he has sent – Unconditional Divine Love. There must be that thorough understanding.

I remember when I first met the Master. I'll tell you these things. I don't like to be personal, but he asked me to say a few things. He says you can tell this story or that story, and I'm happy to do it, because I feel his presence when I tell you.

In Boston when I first met the Master, on Christmas Eve in 1920, and I sat at his feet. I went in skeptical. I wasn't going to be hoodwinked by anybody, but I found out I was being hoodwinked by myself. And I sat at his feet after awhile, and the first question he asked me, "Doctor, will you always love me as I love you?" That's the Unconditional Love, Divine Love which is between people. And I said, "Yes, I will," because I felt something. And then the load lifted off of my shoulders. It lifted. Something was taken away. The great weight was taken away, and it's been away ever since. Don't worry, there's plenty of trouble, but I've never felt deserted. I've always felt the support of God through the channel of the Guru.

And so, that's what God does through His channel. That's what He does through His Divine Boatman is to take the load of us so there's no other way you can take it off. You can have a million dollars, and a million houses – a million of anything. The load will still be there, until you make that connection with God through the channel of the Guru.

And so, I find in reading about the different Masters, it's the same thing. When Sri Yukteswarji met, when our Master met Sri Yukteswarji, he [Sri Yukteswarji] said to him, "I give you everything I've got." That simply meant I give you Unconditional Divine Love. That's what we want. Nothing else will satisfy us, until we feel that oneness with God. Having that, we can have nothing of this material world, but having that, we have everything. That is what God is – the greatest thing we can ever hope to have, the thing which we must have and will not be satisfied until we do have it, unconditionally, without any reservation. You can meditate until you're black in the face, you can see the Light of God and do all sorts of things, you can see the Spiritual Eye, you can see parts of the Astral body, but you will not be satisfied until all these things are taken away, and you stand face to face in front of your One Father, your One God. That's what the Guru does for you. You can get so far, but he takes you, and says, "here he is, Lord, here he is; your child, take him." That's what the Guru can do for you.

And so, man was placed on earth for one purpose, and that was to express Divinity. We can do that. We've have the power within us due to our unique, or rather, our great size of our brain, and the unique centers of the spine. We can express Divinity, but how can we express Divinity unless the Guru shows us how to do it? Therefore, a true Guru gives us three things; three things, which we should remember.

First, he gives us the vision. He gives us the Vision of God. I remember when I first met the Master – you'll pardon a few personal references, because this subject is very dear to me, because all I have I have because of the Master, what little it is, still I have it, and I thank God that I at least have something which sustains me. So, the Guru first gives you the vision, a Vision of God. When I met him he said to me, "You will find, you will find that your life is finished." Well, I found that to be just so. This outward existence – with its birth and death, with its satisfaction and lack of satisfaction, health and disease – passed away, a new life came. That's what he meant. He gave me the vision to understand these things. Otherwise, I wouldn't have understood when he said, "You'll find your life is finished." I knew what he meant. By keeping in tune with him that this worldly existence is superseded by an existence in God. That's one of the things that the Guru will give you.

Now he also gives you the understanding – the ability to understand the practice of self-perfection. As you perform your techniques you are perfecting yourself that you express Divinity, of which I have just spoken, and the Guru will give you the ability to do that. I remember meditating deeply when I first had

more time than I have now to meditate. I felt this whirling sensation, and I went to him, and he said one thing. He said, "When Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness." In other words, he gave me the understanding of the process, which was to perfect me, the Kundalini power was rising, passing through the centers, that I might supersede this worldly consciousness with the One Consciousness of God. That's what the Guru gives you. He gives you the ability to understand the process which you are doing in your meditation. That's the second thing the Guru does.

And third thing that he gives you is the sustaining power to do that. You know how difficult it is. I had a terrible time. That middle ground is awful. You just can't seem to get through it. Don't say it isn't. You all are the same – we're all made in the same pattern, whether you like it or not. And when I remember I got so that I couldn't do anything, I said, "This is one thing I'm gonna do, if I do nothing else. I'm going to do my Kriya, if I do nothing else." I did that. Gradually the middle ground began to lighten up, so to speak. Who sustained me? The Guru sustained me. So realize the True Guru gives you the vision. He gives you the perception to understand what's going on within you. And third he gives you the sustaining power not to let go.

I remember on that first night he said, "I want you to promise me one thing, you'll never avoid me." Well, after seeing what the things which he showed me, I'd promise anything. I said, "All right," but I didn't realize what I was in for. I promised him, and do you know that if I hadn't made that promise there were many times I wouldn't have gone near him. I was so ashamed and so disgusted with myself. But I remembered that promise, and I went and was sustained. So the Guru is really the Voice of the Infinite Father.

Now, once this Guru relationship is established, then the Guru, or rather the disciple is protected. He is never lost sight of by the Guru. Never lost sight of once that Divine relationship is established, that Guru-disciple relationship. The Guru is never, never loses sight of his disciple. I've told you many times, the time I was caught out in the storm, but I wasn't lost sight of. As I looked in the Spiritual Eye, as he had told me, "Remember, if you look in the Spiritual Eye, nothing can touch you. No force in the universe can disturb you," and so I looked there. He knew, though he was miles away. I was taken care of. And so that's what comes when the Guru-discipleship, relationship – Guru-discipleship relationship is entered into, sustained, by the Unconditional Love of God. The Guru protects his disciple. The disciple is never lost sight of.

In the Gita, it says, "He who never loses sight of me, I never lose sight of him." That is, if you keep that relationship established, you are not alone. You will never be harmed in any way. But we do not keep that relationship. Such is the wonderful relationship between Guru and disciple.

Also there is no more spiritual groping of the soul. That's the greatest thing, but the soul feels its satisfaction when you know your Guru is with you. That's what I meant the load is lifted. There's no more groping – “I wonder if this is the way to do? I wonder if that's the way to go? I wonder what's the way to go?” You know the way to go, because there's no uncertainty. No more spiritual groping when the Guru-disciple relationship is established. Establish it now. Establish it today, if you haven't already. And tonight, in your meditation, establish it, and do not get up until you feel it. It can be done, because we're all made in the same Image – the Image of God.

Finally, what's the reward of establishing this Guru-disciple relationship? True freedom – true freedom and the Great Omniscience of God's Consciousness. No more being pushed here and there in this worldly consciousness; not knowing what's coming tomorrow. We, as children of God, allowing that to go on – what's the matter with us? We have not established that Guru relationship, Guru-disciple relationship. Establish that, and then that true freedom of the Presence of God within comes.

And so, in closing, how to do this - tune in, tune in with God's Boatman. Tune in. Where – right here at the Spiritual Eye. How? With your consciousness at the Spiritual Eye, pray, pray, introduce me to God – “Beloved Master, introduce me to God. Get me out of this delusion.” Or you can pray, “Father, reveal Thyself; reveal Thyself as Thou art.”

I used to have all sorts of prayers. There's no use. Pray that one prayer. If you get God, He can give you everything you want. Realize that. Contact at the Christ Center your Channel of God, and when you have made that contact by hearing either the Cosmic Sound, or the Light of Christ at this point, or feel in (file ends)