

Follow the Path of the Great Ones

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Subject this morning: "Follow the Path of the Great Ones," "Follow the Path of the Great Ones."

To follow the great ones necessitates that we know the purpose and goal of life, because they surely have known it, and they have followed it. And, if we are to emulate them, we, too, must know the purpose of this life, and it'll take on an entirely different aspect.

For instance, God, the One Eternal Consciousness and Substance from which all things have come, wanted to be many – to enjoy Himself. And so, He created all of us Souls, and all the things of the universe upon universe. But He wanted us not to forget our Immortal Nature as we enjoyed, or do enjoy, this Creation of His. But the fact that we forget it, we miss the goal of life, you see, by being attached to this Drama, and, therefore, we miss carrying out what we truly are – His children, Divine in nature, as well as human beings.

Now the saints have found that out. They have not lost the realization that they are one with God, just the same in this Drama of Life. It's difficult, because, as the Bhagavad Gita says, "All men walk the earth wholly deluded." But then it goes on further to say, "Get out of that delusion." Now the saints have gotten out, and we, too, must get out. Otherwise, we will never be free – we'll never be peaceful and blissful. We will never have fulfillment, until we get out of this delusion and follow the great ones, who have superseded this worldly consciousness.

And so, during the lifetime of great saints and spiritual leaders, they have done a remarkable thing by getting out of this strong delusion. But they are seldom appreciated until they've gone, because people are so engrossed in this delusion. And so, they usually come, their mission is to start, so to speak, a new era, because people have lost the desire for truth. They've fallen away from Spiritual truth.

And so, these Avatars and great ones come to instigate a new approach to the same eternal truth. You'll find all the great ones, if you read their lives, they spoke the same truth, but the approach perhaps was different. And so, they come for that purpose. And because they come for that purpose, because there is a lack of interest in Spiritual truth, and people are following these outward forms of religion, they are

not taken too very well. They do not usually conform to the ordinary form of religion. But that doesn't mean that they do not have Truth. And so, that's why the great ones come.

St. Francis, he was one of the greatest ones. He felt that no matter what happened to him that he must feel the Joy of God. And only, and when he felt that Joy of God, were things tolerable for him. And whatever happened to him, he felt it was a Gift of God; and no matter what it was, it was reason to be joyous. Now, can we take that attitude toward life? We have to. But, if you can do it, and realize that what comes to you is a Gift of God – no matter what it is – you will be joyous; you will be blissful; and you will know Truth. St. Francis, as I understand, reading about him, talking to the Master, he had a difficult time with his body. But that didn't stop him from being Joyful and filled with Joy. Why? Because he realized something that perhaps the ordinary run of people do not realize, that God is Bliss, God is Joy, and God is Peace. Having that, he had all things, in spite his trials and tribulations.

And so, let us understand that one thing, that Self-Realization Fellowship, which attempts to lead its members to follow and emulate the great ones – especially the founder of Self-Realization Fellowship, Paramhansa Yogananda – they suggest a balanced life. We must have a balanced life. That is, we must have a, an active life outwardly. But it must be for the purpose of pleasing God. That's the only thing. We must be actively outward, otherwise, we atrophy.

And, on the other hand, being Spiritual beings we must meditate regularly, and sustain that Spiritual part of us. That's what Self-Realization Fellowship teaches. And its teachings, and its techniques, point to that end – to give you, enable you, to lead a balanced life – outwardly active, inwardly calm, and meditation, which is so essential for each and every one of us, because of our nature. Self-Realization Fellowship will give you that; those who follow its teachings.

Even as the Gita says, Krishna says, "Though I have all things, yet I work on."¹ Krishna was an Avatar, an Incarnation of God. And though God has all things, He came as the form of Krishna. He was busy, and so we must emulate God, so to speak, even though we would like sometimes to sit down and just meditate upon Him and become lazy. But we must not do that. We must be active outwardly, following the example of the Great Krishna, representing God, who has all things. Yet God is busy with His Universe, and comets, and all sorts of things he has. He's active – so must we be active. But one part of God is Blissful, and Peaceful, Silent, Meditative – so must we. Self-Realization teaches these wonderful points.

If we meditate only, we become lazy. There's nothing worse than a lazy monk. An active person in the world, even though he has some faults, to me is far better than a person who is lazy, and meditates all the time, and doesn't do his share in this world. Our Master, who was a great saint, he used to work 16 hours a day, and in spite of that, he meditated some. Of course, his work was meditation. So let us understand that the balance must be there. And all the saints, you read their lives, they were very active, and also very meditative in contacting God. Our Master has put it this way in his little book *The Master Said*. He says, "When you work for God, not self, it is just as good as meditation."

Now, some of you people who have difficulty meditating – and who doesn't – work for God when you have to work. Work to please Him. The Master says it's just as good as meditation. Why not do it? Realize these truths. Then, he says, "Your work helps your meditation, and meditation helps your work." You need the balance. With meditation only, as I said, you become lazy; and with activity only, what do you become: worldly. You cannot do that. Everybody likes to see an active person. But there must be the balance. There must be the meditative side. Otherwise, you become of the world. "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, unto God the things that are God's."² Both must be done. That's what Self-Realization teachings, teach you, and that's what the saints suggest to do.

Now, Master used to say, "That this world wasn't made just for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and raising children." It's not made just for that. But some people think it is, and they end up very disillusioned. You talk to anybody; I don't care how much wealth they've had, and how many children they've had, and what things they own, and in the end of life. If they had, have not given some time to God, they are the most depressed people, because that's not the way. That's not the goal of life. That is not why this world is created. We must realize it's all right to make money, to accumulate money. It's all right to have kids – if you can stand them – but, we must find God.

I thought of that, because not long ago, I went home to my son, who lives in New York. He has quite a raft of them. He got another one since I was there. I don't know whether I'll return right away, but that's neither here nor there. When I landed there, they're used to it. Such a commotion in the mornings: turn the radio on, and the other – television I guess it was – and such a bedlam. The first day, I thought I was finished. But nature is good, and I kind of got used to it. But I realized more and more, that the purpose of life was not wholly to have children and to make lots of money.

So let us understand that balance must be attained, and the saints and the great ones, they realized the Cosmic Dream. That's the secret. If you can realize this Dream, and not be attached to it, then you can understand and enjoy it. But you can only do that when you follow the saints, and realize God Alone. God Alone – that's the only safety – God Alone.

Sister Gyanamata had a little sign over her bed in the hermitage; says, "God Alone." A great devotee, great follower of the Master, but she found out that God Alone is the only answer. And the saints, knowing that, they can enjoy this Drama of Life and not be attached; not forget their Divine nature. And so must we do as they do.

We also should remember that God Alone is, and that each one of us has only one permanent, lasting, substantial thing – and that is Father, Mother, Friend, Beloved. That's all we have, there's nothing else. We all came from Him – everyone of us – and we are sustained by Him, although we think we do a whole lot toward it. We do not. God's Consciousness plus His Energy has made all things, and it is His Energy that sustains everything that was ever created. And so that's all we have, and we do not belong to anyone but God. We have to realize that. The saints realized that – every one of them. If you read about them, says, "God Alone, God Alone."

Lahiri Mahasaya, he has said these wonderful words. He was one of the greatest ones. He was in the world, and he had a wife, and he had only two children, but he had children. Yet he was one of the greatest saints. Why? Because he realized God Alone, and he says these wonderful words: "Always remember that you belong to no one, and no one belongs to you." Every Soul is a part of God. Don't try to organize their lives. Give them what you know of God. Let God flow through you, and give them God, if you can, but leave them alone, because they belong to no one but God, as you do. And so he said that. He said,

"Reflect, some day, that you will suddenly have to leave everything in this world. So make the acquaintanceship of God now." Right now we can do that. Right now we can make the acquaintanceship with God. Many in this room have done it. Why not all of us? Let us realize that. And having Him, we will have all things.

Lahiri Mahasaya also said these words, those of you who struggle on, feel you're not getting anywhere: "Striving, striving, striving – one day the Divine goal." Must be, because we belong to no one. Do you see his wonderful wisdom? We belong to no one but God. We came from Him, we will go alone with Him. As our Master said, "I came alone with God. I will take nothing from India or America when I go. I will go alone with Him." So will each and every one of us. If God is All, His Peace and Bliss; why not know Him? Why, why waste our time any longer? And it be, can be done, right here and now, while we exist in this earth plane.

Master has written this. I like to quote him, because he says these things so much to the point. In his little book, *The Master Said*: "The whole universe is made of Spirit. A star, a stone, a tree, and man are equally composed of the Sole Substance – God." Doesn't seem possible that stone we kick aside is the vibration of God's Consciousness and His Energy. And those beautiful flowers with all the arrangement of color, is the vibration of God's Consciousness and His Energy, plus His Great Intelligence. So "God Alone is," as Master has said. And God, to bring into being a diversified creation, the Lord had to bestow on everything the appearance of individuality, and yet it's still the one Substance underneath. And if we can know that one underlying Substance, as the saints do, then we will not be disturbed by this diversification and this duality of Consciousness. And that's why Master said to me many times, he said, "Leave all else, but never God's side." Why should we? To have God is everything, and we came alone with Him. There'll be none of our friends there, as we know them now, to go with us. Why not know Him? We go safely and securely as the saints have gone? We can do that, and we can do it right now.

Master also said from his little book, "God understands you when everyone else misunderstands you." People make a mess of their lives, and they make a mess of yours, if you let them. But God understands. Take everything to Him. When things crowd down upon you, and you cannot see the Light; go to Him. Never leave His side. That's what Master said, "Leave all else, but never God's side." And then he says, "He is the Lover who cherishes you always." "He is the Lover who cherishes you always no matter what your mistakes." That's the important thing, because we all make mistakes. We all are weak, because of this delusion we're thrust in. But God never forsakes us. He is with us. "Others give you their affection for awhile, and then forsake you. But He abandons you never."

Realize that. If we could realize that one thing this morning, and forget all the other things that are said – that God never forsakes us – "He abandons us never." If we could but realize that, it would be worth your coming here a million times, because, if God is on your side, and you feel His Presence; if His love permeates your heart, and you feel that He loves you – nothing else matters. "God abandons us never." Those are wonderful words of the Master.

And so Self-Realization is a new des...dispensation, so to speak. Self-Realization is a new dispensation for those who follow it. Because, if you regularly follow the teachings and the techniques, which were given by one who knew God, and was with God, then God will not just be an idea for you. But He will be a vital, living, pragmatic reality. That is something practical, something vital, something you cannot get along without. That's what God should be to each and every one of us. And those who have followed, I have noticed, those who have followed the teachings of the Master, one hundred percent, with loyalty to God, and to him, irrespective of what anybody else does – they have this Reality of God. That's the new dispensation which Self-Realization is teaching. It takes God out of the realm of ideas, and puts Him into the realm of Reality, something which we all need.

And so, Self-Realization teachings will give you that which Jesus spoke of. Jesus spoke of the Holy Ghost. Where is He? Where is He to most people? He spoke of the Comforter? Where is He? Self-Realization Fellowship will give you contact with the Holy Vibration; The Holy Ghost; the Great Comforter, of which Jesus spoke; the Word. "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God,"³ or is God.

Self-Realization will give you that contact, if you do the techniques with loyalty and love for God in your heart. That's why it is a new dispensation. I talk to many people of all religions. They know the theory better than I know the theory, but they don't taste God. They do not taste God. As Master said, "You can know about sugar only when you taste it. You can know about God only when you feel and realize Him as a practicality, not just as an idea." That's what Self-Realization will give you. And those who will follow, because Master had that, he had that oneness with God, therefore, those who follow him, will have it.

And so, if we do this, if we know, if we realize the Holy Vibration, the Word, then Lahiri Mahasaya's words will mean something. They will become true. "Make your acquaintanceship with God now," right in this world – now. How are you gonna know Him afterwards if you don't know Him now? You can't. But through Self-Realization, you can know Him, as the Great Comforter, the Word. In that Holy Vibration is God's Intelligence and His Love. It is worth struggling for. We must do it. We must follow this new way of religion – not this theoretical way, or way of theory – but the way of Realization that God is, and He's in each and every one of us. So Self-Realization will do that.

Master said about churches, I remember he talked to me one time. And he said, "In the churches, teach them to meditate. Teach them to feel God. They will feel the Peace of God, and then they'll come for more," he said. "The theory they've had in all denominations. They're fed up on that. Teach them to feel, and taste the Peace of God, and they'll come for more." That's the only hope is that we feel God's Presence so much that we can compare it to outward living, and realize the difference, and want Him fully. God is. God is. God is. God Alone is. Feel that. Realize that.

And so, the words of Jesus – remember those words – he was one of the great ones, when he said: "The things I do, ye shall do, and greater things." Imagine. Those are truths. This is eternal Truth. "The things I do, ye shall do, and greater things." Don't depreciate yourself. And so, each one of us is made, as was Jesus, from the One Eternal Substance of God; His Consciousness plus His Power flowing through it. And as Jesus said that, he spoke from God's Consciousness, from Christ Consciousness. And it is truth. So can each and every one of us do likewise.

I remember Ananda Lahiri, who was Lahiri Mahasaya's grandson, wrote me a letter, and Lahiri Mahasaya said this. He said: "Know, know God Alone by full surrender to God. Know Him. Be one with Him, and then you not only can see the great Lahiri Mahasaya, you not only can see any of the saints, you can be the saints, you can be the same Consciousness which Jesus has." That's why it's so wonderful and necessary to know God. Because His Consciousness is all, His Power is all. Why do we fool around, waste our time with lesser things? Why not think and live God all the time? That's what we must do. We must emulate the great ones.

And so finally, remember Master's poem, "When I Am But A Dream." He says, "When you cannot find me in unplumbed space, nor no loud command will bring me," then he says, "Read my Whispers From Eternity." Now you see he means go inward; whisper to God: "Father I need Thee, I must have Thee." And then he says, "When you realize, as I now realize, that you are but a dream of God's Great Consciousness and His Power, we will be together eternally in Him." Isn't that wonderful?

You see, we have to elevate our consciousness so that we vibrate with the Great Omniscience of God. In His Omniscience is everything. Lahiri Mahasaya said: "You cannot only see Jesus, but you can be him." Everything is in God's Consciousness, but we're side-tracked in this worldly consciousness. We must supersede it. We can, because we are made in the Image of God.

And so, finally, if you want to emulate the great ones, everywhere you go, live in God. Live in God. You won't have to talk, or anything. If you feel God in you when you mix with people, His Presence will change them. You want to change people; I want to change people, if it's God's will. All right, get God, and then when you go with people, His Power will change them. And greatest of all, when you feel His Peace and Bliss and live it, live God in everything you do – never mind anything else; never mind your position – God will never let you down. Whatever you do, live God. And His Presence, passing through you, if it is His Will, will change the hearts of men, and lasting peace will come upon earth – which we all need; which this old world needs more than ever is peace, peace, peace, bliss, bliss, bliss. No power on earth can do it except God's Power. Let Him flow through you. Let His Great Peace and Bliss flow through you. That will change the hearts of men. Nothing else will.

God is so wonderful. If His Grace just dis...descends upon us enough so we know He's with us every minute, that's the thing. You cannot do it by mind, intellect. Only through His Grace will that come. But when it comes, you will realize, that all of your tribulations, and trials, are nothing. And even if you had to go through them for another thousand years, they'd be nothing. So Great is God. Realize that. Follow the path of the great ones who said, "God Alone, God Alone is." I am going to close by reading Master's poem:

"God! God! God!"

"From the depths of slumber,
As I ascend the spiral stairway of wakefulness,
I will whisper:
God! God! God!

Thou art the food, and when I break my fast Of nightly separation from Thee,
I taste Thee, and mentally say:
God! God! God!

No matter where I go, the spotlight of my mind
Ever keeps turning on Thee;
And in the battle din of activity
My silent war cry is ever:
God! God! God!

When boisterous storms of trials shriek
And when worries howl at me,
I drown their clamour, loudly chanting:
God! God! God!

When mind weaves dreams
With threads of memories,

On that magic cloth I will emboss:

God! God! God!

Every night, in the time of deepest sleep,

My peace dreams and calls,

Joy! Joy! Joy!

And my joy comes singing evermore:

God! God! God!

In waking, eating, working, dreaming, sleeping, Serving, meditating, chanting, divinely loving,

My Soul constantly hums, unheard by any:

God! God! God!