

# Your Power of Choice

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The subject this morning: "Your Power of Choice."

It is very important to understand just how important the power of choice is. For instance, if you choose to utilize your will, and join your will with Satanic forces, you'll have some power, because the Force of Evil is organized, it is a very strong power, but the result will be more suffering for you. No harmony and many other undesirable things. But, if you use "Your Power of Choice" to join your will with the Power of God's Will, then the result is Bliss, Peace, and Happiness, and All-fulfillment. So you can see how important it is to utilize the power of choice, which you have, in the right way.

And so, the key to this subject this morning, "The Power of Choice," is that we must use our choice to do the right thing. That's very important. That's why one of our affirmations is, "Infinite Father, I will will, I will reason, I will will, but guide me to do the right thing." It is very important to use your choice in the right way.

And so, the effects of previous causes, the effects of previous causes such as our environment, our latent impulses, and our habits are the result of actions, which we have done before – past actions. Everything we do; where we find ourselves; our habits; and those latent tendencies which we have of the body, mind, and of the Soul; are the result of some previous action; or they are the result of causes laid up previously, either in this life, or a previous life. Realize that. And so, whenever you do an action, realize before you do it. Stop, and think, because when the action is done, you can't retract it. The cause is laid up. And that cause will be fulfilled.

And so, the Law of Karma is very important, and you have the power of choice. Animals do not have that. They have to go according to instinct. But we can go this way, or we can go the other way, because we have that power of choice. You can see what a tremendous power it is, if utilized in the right way. And so, these present actions which we do, and the present attitudes which we have, are due to past action, which we have done before. We've laid up the cause before. And now, through the law of action, or the Law of Karma, that cause is bearing fruit.

Just like in cases of health. If during your early days you lived according to health laws, the chances are – barring an extreme difficult karma – that you will be healthier than the person who has disregarded those laws, because you have set in action certain causes by your early action, which will, and must, and will be fulfilled. This is the Law of Karma. It is very important. And the fact that we have free choice to do this action, or that action; to do right action, or wrong action, is very important. And it behooves us to do right action.

The Master has pointed this out very clearly in his Autobiography [of a Yogi]. I'll read just a word or two from it about the Law of Karma. You know some people are born with tendencies. They have weakness perhaps in their digestive system, or the respiratory system, or nervous system. Now those tendencies are due to previous action, wrong action, if the tendencies are undesirable. The Law of Karma must be understood. And so, when you do an action, you get ready to do somethin': stop, listen, and think. Count...how many is it...20, or 40, or 100. Be sure to do the right action, because you are setting up a cause, which must be fulfilled.

And so, the Master has this to say: "...man takes for granted that it is he who thinks, and wills, and digests meals, and keeps himself alive, never admitting through reflection (sic),<sup>1</sup>" and the Master says "(only a little would suffice) that it is his ordinary life, that in his ordinary life, he is nothing but a puppet of past actions (karma) and of Nature or environment. Each man's intellectual reaction, feelings, moods, and habits are circumscribed by effects of past causes of this, or a prior life, but lofty..." this is the way out ."..lofty above such influences, however, is his regal soul (sic)<sup>2</sup>." By the power of choice we can act from ego consciousness, or we can act from Truth or Soul Consciousness within us.

And so, this Law of Karma must not be underestimated. Emerson said it most wonderfully. Realize this, and you'll watch your actions. He says, "Every secret is told<sup>3</sup>..." So, just because nobody sees you do it, don't think you're, as they say, "getting away with it." "Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 26, Page 251, Revision 1951, "Identifying himself with a shallow ego, man takes for granted that it is he who thinks, wills, feels, digests meals, and keeps himself alive, never admitting through reflection (only a little would suffice) that in his ordinary life he is naught but a puppet of past actions (karma) and of Nature or environment. Each man's intellectual reactions, feelings, moods, and habits are merely effects of past causes, whether of this or a prior life. Lofty above such influences, however, is his regal soul."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> "Compensation: An Essay," by Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty. What we call retribution is the universal necessity by which the whole appears wherever a part appears. If you see smoke, there must be fire. If you see a hand or a limb, you know that the trunk to which it belongs is there behind."

virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty.” Those are Emerson’s words. Words in the Bible are to this effect that God says, I am the judge, and I will pay, cause to be paid fully for every action that is done. So let us realize that that power of choice which we have can be a real detriment, or it can be the greatest blessing.

So now, we come to free will, or free choice. God has given us free choice to do actions which will bind us, or to do actions which will give us freedom. To do actions which will tie us to this bodily existence, where we are bound by environment, habit, latent impulses, and being bound, we will have no happiness or joy; or we can do action which will lift us into the Presence of God. We’ll do action, which is governed by the Soul within us, the Presence of God; we will do independent action; we will not be bound by habit, or environment; we will not be automatons; we will be true children of God. Acting that way, what’s the result? Freedom; real freedom!

So, there you have the proposition. Act one way and you are bound. Desire binds you. One desire leads to another, and that desire leads to two more, and it goes on. There’s no end to it, and you’re bound by habit, and environment. But, if you do independent action, by making the contact with God, or the Soul within you, and act from that high vantage point, then you are sure to find Happiness, and Peace, and Joy, because the happiness is not in outward consciousness. The fulfillment is not in the fulfillment of desire does not give Peace and Joy.

The fulfillment of desire, the real happiness, is in the Soul itself. And by utilizing our power of choice to be guided by God’s Presence within us, then we will have Freedom, and Peace, and Bliss, because that’s where it is found. It is not found in outward consciousness. It is not found in ego consciousness. Ego consciousness has to do with this world in which we live. Ego consciousness has to do with the fulfillment of the object of senses, hoping that we will find peace, and joy in them. But real action from the Soul has to do with Truth, Soul Consciousness, the Presence of God within us, Reality. We must understand that, as we utilize our power of choice.

And so, will, will, can be guided by error, or truth; error, by using the senses. Error means to follow ego consciousness. Truth means to follow God Consciousness within you. That’s all. Let us make it simple. If we follow error, if we follow ego, we can never be happy, because there is no happiness in the consciousness of which the ego is the director – in worldly consciousness, in outward consciousness.

Master has often said, and I've been reading it lately, that, do not expect any happiness in this world, because it can't exist. Do not expect it. Your home is where? In God; your home is in that Higher Consciousness; the Great Spiritual Consciousness of His Light and Love. There you will find Peace, and Bliss, and All-fulfillment. That's where we belong. We don't belong here, where there's no happiness. I don't say that we can get away from it. We have to play our part. We have a task to do, which God has given to us, but we can do that task without being bound by this worldly consciousness. We can do that task being one with God while we're doing it, can we not? That's what we have to do. And so, realize, the will must be guided either by error, or by truth.

Now Master has pointed this out, most beautifully, in another reference from his Autobiography, about your will being guided by ego. This is what he said, "Human life is beset with sorrow until we know how to tune in with Divine Will, whose 'right course' is often baffling to the egotistic intelligence, ~~my~~ Master said.<sup>4</sup>" And so, you see, it's almost impossible to find any real happiness – happiness that amounts to anything – when we follow ego. But then, superseding this ego consciousness with the Presence of God, and acting from that consciousness, this is what he says, "*Ever new Joy is God.*"<sup>5</sup> If ever-new Joy is God, then He's right with us, and in Him we will find fulfillment. No other place. "He is inexhaustible; as you continue your meditations during the years, He will beguile you with an infinite ingenuity<sup>6</sup>."

Did you ever see desire do that? You fulfill it, and it leaves you flat, unless you get another desire; and that leaves you. But in God, you're not left flat. You cannot exhaust Him. And finally, he says, "Devotees like yourself..." that is, Master, Sri Yukteswarji is speaking to Master "Devotees like yourself who have found the way to God never dream of exchanging Him for any other happiness; He is seductive beyond thought of competition<sup>7</sup>."

That's why the saints say, "God alone." Nothing else, because when you have Him, you will swap Him for nothing, because nothing will equal Him. That's why the power of choice is so important, that we make the right choice. And yet, the way is simple. The way is simple. "Everything you do," Master has said, and all saints say, "Everything you do, do with the idea of pleasing God. You

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<sup>4</sup> Chapter 15, Page 155, Revision 1951

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

cannot fail." That's ""Your Power of Choice."" To do everything, no matter what your task is in this life, to do it to please God. You cannot fail. And you're utilizing "Your Power of Choice" in the greatest way. Because, if you please God and everybody else is displeased, you're fine. You have everything. But, if the whole world is patting you on the shoulder, and saying what a wonderful man you are, or woman, and God is displeased, you have nothing. Realize these things. They're very important.

And so, the power of choice lies in exercising your free will, as we have said, in the right way. And this right way, or this utilizing your will in the right way, how is it developed? You may all be agreed on the fact we must do that, but how are you going to do it? How are you going to act in the right way? That's a very sensible question. Well the point is this. It can be developed by meditation, because in meditation you contact the Presence of God.

And so, this right way of action can be developed. The knowledge of how to act can be developed. First by meditation, wherein you contact God, and unite your will with His Will, your consciousness with His Will; and secondly, that you give effort to do what? To resist; to resist the pull of this world, and this Drama of Life; you give effort to resist that. And while you're resisting, you cling to God. Remember those two things, if nothing else you remember.

If you want to know how to act in the right way; how to utilize ""Your Power of Choice"" in the right way; meditate, because meditation means concentration on God. And while you're meditating, while you're learning, perhaps, to contact God, resist the pull of this outward world by clinging to God. Master said, "Leave all else, but never leave God's side." Things may look rosy to you, and the temptation is to say, "Well, everything's fine. Let's go this way." Don't make the mistake. Take God with you when things are rosy, because just the next day, they may be not rosy. They may be just the opposite.

That's why Master's advice is so important for every one of us. "Leave all else, but never God's side." And when things get real bad and the tendency is to throw up your hands, and say, "Well, I guess it isn't worth it." Cling to God, and you'll see He won't let you down. He will never let you down, because He's your very existence. He's your very consciousness. He's behind your thoughts and your emotions, and your feelings. It is all God's Presence in us. And we have to go to Him. Remember the Master's word, "Your home is not here. Your home is in God." Why not utilize "Your Power of Choice" to know God; to be one with Him; to contact God?

And so, yoga is very scientific, and very necessary, because it gives you the highest way of meditation; the best way to contact God. Self-Realization Fellowship yoga, which simply means the teachings of Self-Realization Fellowship, plus its techniques, and its meditations, are the highest form of yoga – Raja Yoga. Therefore, they will give you, without question of a doubt, contact with God, if you do them with sincerity. And while you're doing them, if you resist the pull of desire, and outward living, and consciousness, and cling to God; finally, or gradually, the veil will be torn apart, and you will see the One Cause of all things – the Great Omniscient Light, and Love of God. Having that, you'll find fulfillment. Having that, you will be so thankful that you utilized "Your Power of Choice" in the right way.

And so, "Your Power of Choice," "Your Power of Choice," if you use it in the right way, it can give you what? Can give you the realization of reality, or truth, and full freedom in God's Omniscient Consciousness; that's why the power of choice is so important. Because, if you utilize it, and follow God within you as your own conscience, the Knowing Conscience of your Soul, you'll realize reality – the One Light and Love of God; and with that will come freedom, which God enjoys – His Great Omniscient Consciousness.

And I'll close with a word or two, once more, of Master's, from his Autobiography: "As soon as the knowledge of reality, or truth (sic)...<sup>8</sup>" and I might say, this is from the Vedas, those old Vedas, ages ago written. Truth doesn't change. We change. Outward things change. The Truth is the same. And so it says, "As soon as knowledge of reality or truth has sprung up (sic)..." As soon as you realize what you are – you are not this body, but the great Light of God, and His Great Love – as soon as you realize that, "...there can be no fruits of past action..." No matter how wicked you've been, if you see the Light of the Infinite, nothing can touch you there, because past actions operate where? In this body consciousness. How can it touch you, if you have the Consciousness of God? And so, the Vedas say, "...As soon as the knowledge of Reality has sprung up, there can be no fruits of past action to be experienced, owing to the unreality of the body, just as there can be no dream after waking."

Where is the dream? You know in the dream how you suffer? Sometimes you're chased by this, and that. When you wake up, where is it? So when you wake up

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<sup>8</sup> Chapter 21, Page 212, Revision 1951, "...As soon as knowledge of the Reality has sprung up, there can be no fruits of past actions to be experienced, owing to the unreality of the body, just as there can be no dream after waking."

in God, this karma doesn't bother you, because, in God, there is no karma. That's why it is important for us to realize this one thing. As the Vedas say, "He who knows Om," Om is the Cosmic Vibration, it's the Presence of God in us with its Sound, and Light, and the Great Feeling of God in our hearts; "He who knows Om, knows God."<sup>9</sup> Utilize "Your Power of Choice." Not to follow ego consciousness, worldly consciousness, but to follow the Presence of God within.

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<sup>9</sup> Patanjali, unknown writing