

The Real Joy of Living

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Our subject this morning, as you know, "The Real Joy of Living," "The Real Joy of Living."

People want certain things in life, because why? They feel, on receiving those things, that they will attain satisfaction and pleasure. But they fail to realize, that when they attain those objects of desire, that they will not really find full satisfaction. As you all know, you want certain things, and you attain them, and then what happens? You tire of them. And then along comes something else. And so, the Drama of Life goes on.

Now, why is this? We must analyze the situation so that we may not be sidetracked into wanting things which do not give us permanent happiness. Now that permanent happiness, or the Joy, is not in the object of senses. It is not in these outward things which we want, nor the conditions. Joy is a natural attribute of the Soul, or Self. It is natural with you. But because we do not realize that, and have placed the fulfillment with the anticipated joy in outward things, and in the mind, that's why we tire of things.

And so, if you could see all things of outward existence, and conditions of the mind, as you own consciousness, and you would realize, that that consciousness is God's Joy, then, it would be permanent, and you would not tire of any condition, no matter what came to you. Because the Joy is not in the mind and outward things, it's a natural, a natural state of your Soul and consciousness. But we fail to realize that.

We think, "If I had this, everything would be fine." And you get that, and soon you want something else. There's no end to it, because we do not realize we do not need anything else. We need one thing, and that's God's Love, His Presence within us. Having that, no matter what happens in this Cosmic Drama or Dream, it makes no difference. That's what we must realize, and understand, which is Truth.

Lord Shankara said, "I am He, I am He, Blessed Spirit, I am He." No matter what the drama is, it is in Him, it is in each one of us, because we are instruments and made in the Image of God. One of the greatest saints said, "The names

Ishwara..." which means God, or Brahma, "God, the Guru and the Soul or Self, these names are synonymous." We are the children of God, therefore, His Consciousness is ours. But there's been a sad change of conditions and things, when we are influenced by this Cosmic Drama, this unreality in which we find ourselves. Understand that one thing. The Reality is our own consciousness. You know nothing but what you are conscious of.

Now in deep sleep, you're conscious, but you say, "No, I'm not conscious." All right, you let someone stick a pin in you, and you'll find out you're conscious just the same. We have to make that dynamic to our own. We have to know what we really are. We have to realize that we are the same as God the Father. Jesus said, "I and my Father are one."¹ And he said from speaking, from His Consciousness as God the Father, "The things I do, ye shall do and greater things²." We have to know it, that's all. We do not have to attain anything. It's in us. We are that. But unreality, or Maya, has crept in and has spoilt the whole thing. Now we have to unspoil it, so to speak, and know that God is, and we are, rays of His Omnipresence. He created all things through Joy, and so He created us by the Power of Joy within Him as a part of Himself, that's all. We have to know it, realize it. Then Joy will mean something far deeper than just ordinary fulfillment of desires, and the satisfaction, and a little happiness that comes with them.

And so, this is the goal of life. And, if it is the goal of life, why, why are we satisfied with the little pleasures from transitory fulfillment of things; the little pleasures from the uncertainties of this early, earthly existence? We are God's children, and we are, and we can have every moment of our, of our existence, if we will work for it – Unending Joy. Not transitory happiness; Unending Joy, Ever-new Joy. You cannot exhaust it, because that's what God is. God is Ever-new Joy; Ever-conscious, Blissful, Eternal, Existence. Think of that.

If something you don't like to do, you have to do it; could you, if you could feel the Presence of God during doing it, it'd be quite different, wouldn't it? But the mind enters into the picture, and we dislike things. Likes and dislikes make us take on the limitations of the mind and this worldly existence. We are not that at all. When deep sleep comes, the body disappears, the mind is quiescent, and you are fully conscious in God. The only thing, in the morning, when you wake up, you realize you had a good sleep. Why? Because you were conscious then, but

¹ St. John 10:30

² 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."

not conscious in waking consciousness. These states of waking consciousness, subconsciousness, are not the real state of God Consciousness. They are unrealities, because they are not always there. They depend on conditions. But that Joy in you, and in me, is always there. We have to just grasp it, and be satisfied that's what we are. Not these other things. That takes discipline, and we have to do it.

And so, we are the Eternal Joy. Not the fleeting joy, but the Eternal Joy of God in Spirit. Because there's One Spirit, there's One Consciousness, and that's God's Consciousness in you and me. Distorted, to be sure, by our taking on the limitations of existence; but nevertheless, One God, One Father; we are rays of Him. And every time you sit calmly in meditation, you feel what He is: Joy, Joy. Love, if you wanna call it.

The greatest Commandment, "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy strength, with all thy Soul, and thy might³." (*Sic*) Why? Because that's the reality. "And your neighbor as yourself,⁴ (*sic*)," which is the reality, too, because there's One Consciousness in you, in me, in all. "On these two commandments hang all the law, all (*sic*) the prophets⁵" on these two Commandments hangs the law of "The Real Joy of Living." That's all we need, all the world needs is that. They've got a good many formulas for what they need, but they really need one thing – God alone. All the saints say, God alone. Why? Because He is. And in this service, if you just keep quiet, as you are; feel the Peace and Bliss; you will know God is here.

I have a reference at this time, just to substantiate perhaps, what I have said, from the Autobiography of a Yogi⁶. Got it here somewhere; here it is. Master says this: "How quickly we weary of earthly pleasures! Desire for material things is endless⁷;" We all know that. We get awful tired running from one thing to another, and right there, within us, is the Peace and Bliss of God. But we're so used to thinking we've got to have this, and that, and something else; some condition. God is Unconditioned. His Love is Unconditioned, Unending, Ever-

³ Mark 12:30, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength this is the first commandment"

⁴ Mark 12:31, "And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."

⁵ Matthew 22:40, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets"

⁶ The Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramhansa Yogananda, 1946 Release

⁷ Ibid. Chapter 14, "'How quickly we weary of earthly pleasures! Desire for material things is endless; man is never satisfied completely, and pursues one goal after another. The 'something else' he seeks is the Lord, who alone can grant lasting joy.'"

new. That's what we want. But we are sidetracked, because of the Maya, or the delusion, as it is called. And so, desire for material things is endless.

"Man is never satisfied completely and pursues one goal after another⁸."
"Outward longings drive us from the Eden within. They offer false pleasures which only impersonate Soul happiness⁹." "Ever-new Joy is God¹⁰." Ever-new; not anything that gets stale and worn out, or exhaustible. "Ever-new Joy is God." You cannot exhaust Him. "He is inexhaustible; as you continue your meditations during the years, He will beguile you with an infinite ingenuity...¹¹"
You cannot exhaust Him.

And then, from The Science of Religion: "There is not the shadow of a doubt," our Master has written, "but that bliss, or joy, consciousness is God Consciousness¹²." (*Sic*) "The tumults of the world die away, excitements disappear... We seem to be translated into another region...¹³" when you feel the Joy of God. Meditate and try it. Don't pass judgment until you try it. "We seem to be translated into another region, the fountainhead of perennial Bliss, the starting point of one unending continuity¹⁴." In this world there's, there's a break in the consciousness: waking consciousness, subconsciousness, sleep. But in God, there's an unending continuity of consciousness; and that Consciousness is Bliss and Joy; Inexhaustible, Ever-new. Then he goes on to say: "Is not bliss consciousness then the same as God Consciousness?¹⁵"

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid, "Outward longings drive us from the Eden within; they offer false pleasures which only impersonate soul-happiness. The lost paradise is quickly regained through divine meditation. As God is unanticipatory Ever-Newness, we never tire of Him. Can we be surfeited with bliss, delightfully varied throughout eternity?"

¹⁰ Ibid, "Ever-new Joy Is God. He is inexhaustible; as you continue your meditations during the years, He will beguile you with an infinite ingenuity. 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."

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² The Science of Religion, by Paramhansa Yogananda, 1957 Releases, Chapter II, Page 49, "There is not a shadow of doubt as to the absolute identity of Bliss-consciousness and God-consciousness, because when we have that Bliss-consciousness, we feel that our narrow individuality has been transformed and that we have risen above the duality of petty love and hate, pleasure and pain, and have attained a level from which the painfulness and worthlessness of ordinary consciousness become glaringly apparent. We also feel an inward expansion and all-embracing sympathy for all things."

¹³ Ibid, Page 40-50, "The tumults of the world die away, excitements disappear, and the 'all in One and One in all' consciousness seems to dawn upon us. A glorious vision of light appears. All imperfections, all angularities, sink into nothingness. We seem to be translated into another region, the fountainhead of perennial Bliss, the starting point of one unending continuity. Is not Bliss-consciousness, then, the same as God-consciousness, in which the above states of realization appear?"

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid. Page 50

And so, even if there were a Utopia here on earth, we wouldn't be satisfied. We'd tire of it. But in God, it is Ever-new. No matter the best conditions you can think of, and live in them, plenty of money; you'll tire of it, because it isn't God. If God's Consciousness is Bliss and Joys Unending, Ever-new, Inexhaustible; something you will never tire about, tire of, as our Master has written.

And so, that Joy is what we need and must have – Joy Unending. How different from worldly consciousness with its disappointments. You get all set to get this thing done and (Doctor claps), it's gone. You get a deal all ready, everybody feels fine, and then, (Doctor claps again), the deal is over. But with God, you get set for the deal, and if you can just get the deal over, and know Him, it'll never end. That's the difference between this unreality and the One Real Eternal Reality, the Presence of Joy, or God within.

God created us from Joy. As our Master said, "He loves us more than you can imagine. He loves us, and is crying for us, more than we can ever think to cry for Him," because we are His Nature. Each one of us exemplifies a little bit of God's Nature caged in this limited body. But when you expand it, break the limitations; you become the Source Itself, because, as all the saints say, God and the Guru and the Soul Itself are one.

Now, why is the Guru one with God and with us? Because a true Guru, or the Real Great Guru is God Himself; and one of His manifestations, who has exemplified the fullness of God, is the Omniscience of God. That's why that is so. So don't depreciate yourself. Realize that you are because you are. You know He exists. Close your eyes, and you have no trouble knowing you exist. Why? Because of that eternal truth. God the Creator, the Guru, or the Omniscience of God, and your own Soul, which is God in this little body. These names are synonymous. These are realities, if we can but realize that. You can only realize it getting above senses, mind, and intellect, of what I have said this morning. To do that you have to follow the techniques, which one who was one with the Joy of God, has left for us, our Founder, Paramhansa Yogananda. And those of you in this room, who have followed those techniques, know these things to be true, and have, no doubt, experienced the Peace, of which Jesus spoke, that passeth all understanding¹⁶. Because it is, it is the One Great Truth of Reality.

¹⁶ Philippians 4:7, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

And so, we come to another point, which is very interesting. The finding of the Joy of, "The Real Joy of Living" is open to all. Realize this, is God cannot be cornered, so to speak. God is not partial. It is open to all. And the way is through the great science of yoga. Why? Because the science of yoga, which means union with God, unites this Spirit within us, to the Universal Aspect of God, or the Great Cosmos. We are little miniature cosmoses, so to speak, or we are a little miniature cosmos. In other words, when we expand our consciousness, which is one with the Great God Himself, we become that. That's why the science of yoga is so wonderful. And it can be applied to everyone; everyone. It is open to everyone, as our Master will point out to you as I read the reference.

And so, realizing this, someone said, asked the question, "Which is greater, a swami or a yogi?"¹⁷ "Which is greater, a swami or a yogi?" Well, you know about the Swamis. The Swami's, they have a, it's a monastic order. And, I think, you have to renounce a lot of things, and title, and money, and all sorts of things, and those things. What is a Yogi? Anyone; anyone endeavoring to unite his Spirit with God, is a Yogi.

And so, realize that yoga is open to all. Yoga is open to all whether in a monastic order or in the world. I think sometimes it's more difficult in the world. The tests surely are tremendous. But God is open to everyone. So is yoga. And our Master has said that. These are his words. Here are Master's own words, and this is the most wonderful thing. People are taken up with the little things of life, life, whether you're a Congregationalist, or a Methodist, or a Baptist, or a Catholic, or whatever it is; makes no difference when you find God. That's the point. The difference is there before you find Him. So, here are the Master's words: "If and when oneness with God is achieved, the distinctions of the various paths disappear¹⁸." Isn't that wonderful?

So, those of you who think you're better than someone else, forget it. If you have God, you'll know you're not, so will I. So that's the Greatness of God. And all the great saints say the same thing. That's why this saint I spoke of, said, the names of God – Ishwara, Guru, and the Self – mean the same thing. The paths differ until you reach Him. So that's the way the Master answered that question, "Which is greater, a swami, or a yogi?" In God there's no difference. In God it

¹⁷ The Autobiography, Chapter 24, "Which is greater," one may ask, "a swami or a yogi?" If and when final oneness with God is achieved, the distinctions of the various paths disappear."

¹⁸ Ibid.

makes no difference if you're a male or a female, married or unmarried, or whatever you are, because He is. Let us understand that.

Now, I'd like to read just another reference from the Autobiography to clear this point up, showing you that the various paths disappear on the attainment of God through yoga. Yoga means union. And it is so wonderful, because it has its Cosmical Aspect. For instance, when you still the breath, when you still the breath through the practice of yoga, what happens? You immediately, your consciousness expands into the Great Cosmic Consciousness of God, because breath ties us to this vehicle. You may be concentrating sometime, and be all set. Suddenly, (Doctor inhale's loudly to demonstrate) you take a breath, and where's your concentration? Or you go to the moving pictures, as I said one Sunday here, and boy, it was breathtaking. Why? Because your, your breath stops when you get so concentrated. Why not do it willingly, or knowingly, and then you can concentrate at will. Still the breath – because the heart slows down – then your consciousness immediately becomes Universal. That's why yoga is so wonderful. I hope I make this little point clear. It's difficult to make it clear.

But don't think you are this little body alone. God is in you as the Omniscient Consciousness, the Universal Consciousness. That's what you are. You have to know it, that's all. And we can know it, because we're made in the Image of God. In other words, there's One Consciousness, and He is within each and every one of us. So yoga is a great thing, if you'll practice it.

The Master said to one person, he says: "I can tell you how to do it, but you've got to do it." So we've got to do it. We, if we want God, we must labor. But remember the Master's words: "He wants us more than we want Him. He is crying for us more than we want Him." Think of it. Why? Because He's given us free will, and He knows the predicament we're in. With that free will we are stubborn – outrageous at times – because we exercise it. We get big-headed, and stand up and think we know everything. When it's God, humble like a child, never says anything. Why? Because He's got everything, except that love. He wants that. That's the way He's made it. He's given us free will to accept Him or reject Him. Personally I want Him. I know you all do, but the delusion is strong.

So, these are the Master's words. I'd just like to read you a few to show you eternal truths which are applicable to everyone, irrespective of whether he's in a monastic order, or in the world. How could God be so partial? And just to show you, here, this is what we read: "The Bhagavad Gita, however, points out that the methods of yoga are all-embracing. Its techniques are not meant only for

certain types and temperaments such as those few who incline toward the monastic life¹⁹." It's wonderful when they can. I think they have it easier. But most of us are in the world. "...such as those few inclined toward monastic life, yoga requires no formal allegiance, because yoga science satisfies a Universal need. It has a natural universal applicability.²⁰" (*Sic*) Why? Because we are God's Consciousness bottled up in this little body. When you break the limiting bounds, boundaries, of this existence, bodily existence, naturally you go to the Cosmic Existence, the Universal Existence. That's why yoga is so wonderful.

"A true yogi..." Now, don't be giving reasons why you can't practice yoga with all these family things, and all that, and the wives, and the husbands, and the whole business that goes with it. This is what he says. "A true yogi may return dutiful in the world. There he is like butter on water..." this is a true yogi now, "...and not like the easily-diluted milk of unchurned and undisciplined humanity²¹," which we all know is true. They don't care for discipline. But those who do, they can find God. "To fulfill one's earthly responsibilities is indeed the higher path, provided the yogi, maintaining a mental uninvolvedness with egotistical desires, plays his part as a willing instrument of God²²." We have one of the greatest saints in our Masters, the Great Lahiri Mahasaya, who did that. Family man, children; but my! How he was one with God. And so, we should take heart – all of us. Makes no difference where we are, God is available to every one who really wants Him, because of the science of yoga.

Just a little more; "There are a great number of souls living in American or European or other non-Hindu bodies today who, though they may never have heard the words *yogi* or *swami*, are yet true exemplars of those terms. Through their disinterested, disinterested service to mankind, or through their mastery over the passions and thoughts, or through their single hearted love of God, or through their great powers of concentration, they are, in a sense, yogis; they have

¹⁹ The Autobiography, Chapter 24, "The Bhagavad Gita, however, points out that the methods of yoga are all-embracing. Its techniques are not meant only for certain types and temperaments, such as those few who incline toward the monastic life; yoga requires no formal allegiance. Because the yogic science satisfies a universal need, it has a natural universal applicability."

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid. "A true yogi may remain dutifully in the world; there he is like butter on water, and not like the easily-diluted milk of unchurned and undisciplined humanity. To fulfill one's earthly responsibilities is indeed the higher path, provided the yogi, maintaining a mental uninvolvedness with egotistical desires, plays his part as a willing instrument of God."

²² Ibid.

set themselves the goal of yoga-self-control...²³ union, which comes from self-control.

And so, as I read this, I have admired the Master so much. He was in the monastic order of Swamis. Then he became a Paramhansa. But he spoke the truth of living in the reality of the Joy of God's Presence. And, therefore, through disciplinary yoga, we should discipline ourselves. As it says in Daniel, the moment you set your heart to understand, and then do something about it, chastise yourself, or discipline yourself – I've just forgotten the word – thy words are heard and I am come for thy words²⁴. It couldn't be any clearer. We have to do something about it. Discipline ourselves. Make the joy of living our own. Be one with it.

And so, the final answer is this. We have to supersede the temporary joy of this worldly existence, and the fulfillment of desires, with the permanent, Ever-new, Unlimited, Inexhaustible Joy of God's Presence. Then we will be as we should be – true examples of the Presence of God, in and through all things, including each one of us.

And so, Joy is a natural state of living, and that we may not choke off that Presence of God within us as Joy, we have to simplify our lives. You take your own existence, you have so much to do, there's hardly any time left for God, which is the only Reality. And so, we have to simplify our lives, that we have some time, at least one hour out of the 24, to the pursuit of the Joy of God's Presence as our own. We have to do that. We have to realize that Eternal Spirit of God as Joys within us. And then, that Ever-new Joy, Unexhaustible, as the Holy Ghost within us.

As we talked this morning, the Great Cosmic Sound of Om is the Holy Ghost. In that is the Joy of God. We have to be able to realize that by not being taken up with outward things too much, and devoting a little more time to the Presence of God.

²³ Ibid. "There are a number of great souls, living in American or European or other non-Hindu bodies today who, though they may never have heard the words yogi and swami, are yet true exemplars of those terms. Through their disinterested service to mankind, or through their mastery over passions and thoughts, or through their single hearted love of God, or through their great powers of concentration, they are, in a sense, yogis; they have set themselves the goal of yoga-self-control. These men could rise to even greater heights if they were taught the definite science of yoga, which makes possible a more conscious direction of one's mind and life."

²⁴ Daniel 10:12, "Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words."

And to close, I'll read you from our own Scriptures, from Romans, in which it says this very thing – and let us do it. Let us make up our minds, from this day on, to do it. And, if we haven't the will, to make the will, by joining our will with God's Will. Some say, "I wanna do it. I know I do. I wanna do it. I know what I should do, but I just can't do it." You can't do it alone. That's right. But when the Grace of God comes, you can do it. Get the Grace of God by the humble, devoted, without pride, surrendering to Him. He's the only one can shake you up and do it. Let the Grace of God be yours by giving a little more time to the Presence of the Holy Ghost within you as the Joy of God Eternal.

And from Romans, from our own Bible even, the science of yoga is pointed out to be what we need and what we should practice: "For the kingdom of God..." Romans, the 14th Chapter, the 17th Verse, "For the kingdom, kingdom (*sic*) of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." So that's "The Real Joy of Living" is to know the Presence of God in the Holy Vibration as the Peace, Unending Bliss, Eternal Joy, of Spirit.