

God Is Joy

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Our subject this morning is "God Is Joy."

Now, man's ordinary conception of God is something like this. That is: Superhuman, Infinite, Omniscient, Omnipresent, and Personal, or Impersonal. But, whatever conception we have, it must be of a practical value, and it must be found to be Universally necessary.

For instance, let us take the point that God is Omnipresent. Now that doesn't mean anything to us unless we have some concrete evidence of God. For instance, we read in our Bible, that God is "the Word." Now, if that God can be...that Word, rather, can be perceived as heard, or seen, or can be felt, then God becomes of a practical value.

Now, as our Master has written in one of his books, *The Science of Religion*, he says, "that if our conception of God does not influence our daily conduct, gives us inspiration; does not necessitate His Conscious Presence in the satisfaction of a want; in our dealings with people; in earning money; in passing an examination; in doing the most trifling, or highest duties; then that conception is useless."

And so, just saying that "God is Omnipresent," or having a theoretical conception of this Omnipresence – His Presence – is not enough. But, when we say that "God is the Word," and when we can perceive that Holy Vibration as the Great Cosmic Sound of Om; or we can see at the Christ Center the Omniscient Light of God; or we can feel in our hearts the Ananda, the Bliss; when we can do that. Then, God becomes a practical value. And as that Bliss is a part of His Presence in us, He then becomes universally necessary.

Now, our Master, the founder of Self-Realization Fellowship, has taught this conception of God: "God is Ever-Conscious, Blissful, Eternal-Existence. And the definition of Bliss is Heavenly Joy." And so, God must be with us in every action that we do – under every condition – He must be with us as Heavenly Joy.

And so, our conception of God should stir us to seek Him in the midst of our daily lives. He should be a burning necessity, every minute of our existence. Not just on Sunday, but every moment that we are alive and conscious, we should be conscious of God's Presence as Heavenly Bliss.

Now, people, in general, do not seek God, for the simple reason that they are not aware of His Attractiveness. They do not try to experience Him through the proper channel. If they did, then they would experience just what God is, as our Master has said, "Ever-Conscious, Blissful, Eternal-Existence." Having that, then they could compare that state of consciousness, or the state of Consciousness of the Presence of God within us, with ordinary, outward consciousness of this life, in which we find ourselves. Then, and then only, having the experience of both can we compare.

Now the usual outmoded, dogmatic ideas about God must be replaced by a pragmatic, appealing conception. And so, what are we really seeking? You say, "God!" Well, that is true, provided that in finding Him you will attain this: you will attain freedom from pain and want; and, also, you will attain permanent Bliss – Heavenly Joy. Unless this comes with your finding of God, then you'll never be satisfied. But this is the motive behind all endeavor – even the finding of God – that you be permanently freed from pain and suffering, and that in its place you feel joy, Heavenly Joy.

Now God, or Heavenly Joy, we all seek, cannot be found in sense experience, but rather in the Kingdom of God within. Happiness, Joy, will not be found in the fulfillment of desires through the attaining of the objects of senses. But it will be found in our own true nature – which is Joy; which is Bliss; which is God. And as our Master, Paramhansa Yogananda, has said: "The proof of the existence of God as Joy and Bliss lies in our self." Our own Master, and all other great saints, have proclaimed a Joy of the Soul, or God within, which superseded all sensual pleasures. "Divine Joy," they say, "is so all-consuming as to offset all human suffering."

For instance, you can know this only when you experiment, follow right techniques, and you feel the Presence of God within. And, in deep meditation, you will find yourselves rising above outward consciousness, and you will find that consciousness being replaced by Joy, by Bliss, by Heavenly Joy, which supersedes all outward worldly consciousness. Having this, you will see the futility of trying to find fulfillment in this outward world of delusion, and you will turn toward your own inner resources of the Presence of God. And there you will find His Presence as Peace; as Bliss; and as Joy.

This is so, because God is in each and every one of us, and that our own consciousness is none other than His Consciousness – though at times, attached to the vehicle. Because our Master has said, "That

there is not a shadow of a doubt as to the absolute identity of bliss consciousness and God Consciousness.” And so, if this is so, as it surely is, God is Joy, Heavenly Joy. For in 1st John, the 4th Chapter, the 8th Verse, we read, “God is love.” “God is love.”

And so, in conclusion, I’d like to close with a few of the Master’s words, from one of his books, Metaphysical Meditations, where we read as follows: “I will seek the kingdom of God in the joy arising from constant, long, deep, continuous meditation. I will conscientiously seek to contact God within, and will not be satisfied with a little imaginary inspirations that comes from short, restless silences. By contacting God, I will be reclaimed as His child. Without asking or begging, I shall receive all prosperity, all health and wisdom for my share as His Divine child.”

God Is Joy. God is Peace and Bliss. God is Heavenly Bliss, and Peace, and Joy.