

Using the Power of Thought That We May Change

Dr. M.W. Lewis

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The subject this evening is "Using the Power of Thought That We May Change." These notes are taken from a lecture by Paramhansa Yogananda given in the early part of 1947.

The power of thought is the greatest force, the greatest power that we have. And so, to use this power of thought in the greatest way, with the greatest efficiency, we must depend not on a limited source, but on the Infinite Source.

In the dreamland, when we think we are thin, we can make ourselves fat just by thinking it, and vice versa. When we are fat, we can make ourselves thin by the same power of thought. Such is the power of thought.

Thought is the greatest power, the root cause of our existence, which controls the physical, the financial, the moral and spiritual, every condition of our bodies. And so, we come to the question, why have we not changed. Why? Because we have concentrated more on the limited source that sustains our body, and mind, and we have not used the greater power of thought. That is why we have not changed. We have depended more on physical conditions and less on spiritual conditions.

Some people work very hard, save money, and then suddenly something happens, and everything is gone. Why? Because they did not depend on that Infinite Source. If you learn to depend on that Source, you will feel life change very quickly, and you will never be left out.

Just take the instance of St. Francis. He lived in a shed. He lived on scraps. He had nothing, and yet the splendor of God was with him. Why? Because he was one with that Infinite Source.

We keep ourselves healthy, and well and then suddenly disease comes and nothing can be done for us. We are not able to change as we want to change, because we have not put our minds on the Changeless. Now, if God wants to heal us, no matter of what it is, instantly you can be healed of any disease. People do not seek that. We are brought here as a part of the show, and we were not brought here to be tortured. But when we build upon our own desires, and

anchor our faith in this world, we will never change, because we are anchored to the limited source.

And so, Jesus said you cannot serve two masters.¹ You cannot serve God and matter. If we serve matter, we are bound by the duality of consciousness and change. But, if we become united with Spirit, then we are bound to the changeless – the source of all things.

In Mark, the 10th Chapter, the 29th and 30th Verses, we read as follows: "...verily, verily I say unto you. There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,² but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands..."³ (*Sic*)

In other words, if we leave everything for the Infinite Source of supply, then we are one with the Consciousness of God, which is that Infinite Source, and from which all things have come, and, therefore, we receive everything that He has. But then it goes on: "...with persecutions..." Yes, we will be persecuted. We will be persecuted because people do not understand the purpose of life. Not knowing that the purpose of life is to be one with the Changeless in which are all things; not knowing that, they persecute us, thinking that we have left all the realities of life, when, in fact, we have left the unrealities for the One Reality of life, the Infinite Life, and Light, and Source. But, it goes on to say this, but he shall "...receive eternal life in the world to come."⁴ (*Sic*)

So, in this world we have to forsake the body. This body and the earth are part of the show. Every night the Lord takes us into that Free State where we are free from all burdens of existence; where we are neither man nor woman, rich nor poor, diseased or healthy. In that state you know that you are the Image of God. But you have not concentrated on that side. When you wake up in the morning, you feel that you have been peaceful, and that you have been in the Realm of Peace. We have concentrated on the show, which our souls are seeing. We have concentrated on the product of the Great Intelligence of God, rather than on that Intelligence.

¹ Matthew 6:24, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other . Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

² Mark 10:29, "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,"

³ Mark 10:30, "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

⁴ Ibid.

The Master says: "I have seen already how this film is going to be. It is not fun when you see it beforehand, but, nevertheless, when it comes it is very hard to remember that this is a show. For even Jesus said, 'Father, Father, why hast Thou forsaken me.'" Delusion is very strong, but still he overcame that.

In the Gita⁵, speaking about delusion, Krishna says, "O Arjuna, get out of my delusion." Delusion comes by attachment to form. And form is built up through the duality of consciousness or the outward form of consciousness. And so, Jesus said, in order that we might escape delusion, "Seek first the kingdom of heaven."⁶ And Patanjali said, "Tear out the cause of suffering by the roots." The cause of suffering is the idea that we are this body.

And so, rebellion against this play of life, which we realize is a play, and that the body and the world, the earth, are parts of that play; rebellion comes when we are not in tune with the Infinite. For then we do not realize the reality behind the Drama of Life. If we are in tune with God, we can overcome the greatest sufferings in life, this Cosmic Dream, though it is terrible and a nightmare, if we are one with the Infinite, with the Lord, we will see that we will be free from it. Only by being one with Him, He who has created, is the cause, and is the cause and end of all things, can we be free. But when we realize our oneness with Him, then we have true freedom. If we have this attitude, we will be completely free. Then we will be completely detached. This is the way God wants us to be. Seek first the kingdom of heaven. That's God's Consciousness, that Realization of oneness with Him is the supreme happiness within us, because that One Consciousness, or God, is Love and Bliss.

Now on the path toward the Infinite, there are things which stand in the way of our using our mental powers in order that we may change and go back to God. I have called these "mental tyrants." First, we must cease to live for ourselves. From a, from now on let us live for others. And we can do this when we behold the Presence of God in them. Not until then can we really live for others.

Another of the mental tyrants is desire. Desire, of course, motivates all thoughts. And, if our desires are on worldly things, things of the lesser importance, and not on the Infinite Source, then the power of our thoughts to change, will be of like character. We must watch our desires. If we have desires for outward things,

⁵ The Bhagavad Gita or The Lord's Song, Translated by Dr. Annie Besant, 1936

⁶ Matthew 6:33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

then our power is directed to attaining those outward things. But if we have the one desire, to be one with God, then our power of thought is directed only to the Infinite Source.

Another important mental tyrant is “mental laziness.” Physical laziness can be forgiven, because sometimes the body gives trouble. Some people are born with strong constitutions, some with a weak constitution; some with a body that will respond to them, others with a lethargic body. And so, mental laziness can be forgiven...but...or rather physical laziness can be forgiven – but not mental laziness. When we are mentally lazy, it is not because of pain, because there is no pain in mental effort compared to physical effort. And so, how can we expect to contact the Infinite Source, and thereby change, unless we are free from mental laziness?

In thought lies the way to freedom. Because remember, everything that we are, every condition in which we find ourselves – such as physical, financial, moral and spiritual – we find ourselves there because thoughts, our thoughts, has produced that condition. And so, by the same power of thought we can change that condition. We can go back to the Infinite Source.

The Master also says, in his lecture; do not lead a mechanical life. Also, do not think that, because you have been bad, that you have to remain that way. The longer you delay, the greater the effort you will have to make. So make the effort now, and change. Change your company. Do not mix with those who drag you down. Mix with calm people, people of self-control. And also, eat to live rather than live to eat.

Criticize yourself, and not anyone else. I never criticized my Master, because it deflects the Beam, and this is very important. If you can be 100 percent for the Master, in spite of other conditions, when you do not see clearly the way; when you think perhaps, he is making mistakes. Still, still under all conditions, if you remain 100 percent loyal, free from criticism, then the Beam from God to you, as the Master is directing, you'll never be deflected.

If you are in tune with the Guru, you will find freedom, because the Guru talks and directs you, while God does not. The Guru will talk straight to you. That is why God sends the Guru. The Guru is he who is sent by God to help you over the rocky places. He's a Spiritual Father. "None can come unto me unless the

Heavenly Father draweth him.⁷" (*Sic*) God sends a message to you through the Guru. To be in tune with him is to find freedom, because your will is guided by your bad karma, mass karma, and nature's karma, as well as past karma. And so, you can see, it is impossible to be truly free until you have become one with the Infinite Power and Wisdom, one with the Infinite Source - and the Guru, because he is one with that Source, can lead you to that same Source.

Finally, this is most important. "Every one of the students," said Paramhansa Yogananda, "who kept a little chamber of apart, wherein they did not let me in, never found freedom." Why? Because they were thinking what they wanted to do, and not what they should do. There must be complete surrender to God. And that means to the channel through which He is working to take you back home. The great Lahiri Mahasaya emphasizes, emphasizes this when he says: "Full surrender produces great psychological, physiological changes in the body." Full surrender is necessary for the operation of God's Law to take us back home.

And so, unless we have full surrender, full dependence upon the Guru, which means full dependence upon God, because He is the Voice of God, we cannot use the power of thought in the greatest way – the strongest way – to change; to change and go back, once again, to the Infinite Source, or God.

"I found my freedom through my Guru," says the Master. "It took dynamite to change my mind, but I had the will power to listen."

You can see here that the Master, although he had a dynamic mind to use his own will, still he had greater wisdom to use that same power of will to follow his Guru. To be able to obey is to be free. It takes more will power to obey than it does to follow your own will.

And so, to obey the Master, or anyone, through the channel of God – anyone who has been appointed by the Master to carry on his work – to obey under those conditions, takes great strength of will. But, if we do that, then the power of thought is changed, is tremendous, because we are using our will, coupled with the Wisdom-guided Will of God.

⁷ St. John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

In obeying the Guru, or the channel of God, does not mean to obey a Demon, but one who is in tune with God. Not to obey a mechanical man, but to obey one who is free in God. When you obey, then you, also, as the Guru has true freedom, will have true freedom.

So, let us, in closing, remember that to change we must use the power of thought; to change in the greatest possible way. That is, to go back home to God, we must use our thoughts, coupled with the Infinite Source – not with the limited source of the intelligence used in the Drama of Life, in this duality of consciousness. But use our thoughts, coupled with the power and strength of the Master of the Universe. He is the Infinite Source. If we are one with Him, one with His Light and Consciousness, and then as the Power of God is Supreme in the universe, as the Power of Love is Supreme in the universe, so we will change.