

The Way to a Higher Life

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The subject this morning: "The Way to a Higher Life."

"The Way to a Higher Life," said in a few words, which, if we just remember these few words, we'll be safe. The way to the higher life is to take God with us in everything we do, great or small, from the least activity to that which may seem to be the greatest. If we can feel the Presence of God, that's the higher life; and it can be done.

Why should we, as God's children, made in His Image, be subject to attachment to this worldly existence, which gives us nothing in the end but emptiness, uncertainty, and bewilderment? God doesn't want us to do that. He wants us to feel Him in everything we do; to feel His Love. How hard it seems though, at times. Why? Because He has made it that way, so we will make the effort to get out of this delusion and return home to Him. That's why He made it. He made it for our highest good.

And so, in the rush of this mundane existence what has happened? Men have forgotten God. Men have absolutely forgotten Him. And yet, He is their very life and their existence, behind all activities. Behind everything they can conceive of, is God. And yet, they have forgotten Him. And so, that is not the goal of life – to forget God, to be attached, or lured by these outward doings of this worldly existence – attachment to that: having children, making money, and not applying it the way we should. That's not the goal of life.

The goal of life is to be with God. The Soul demands, the Soul demands that we do not forget God; the Soul will keep at it until it returns home to God – that is without question. If it does not, what do we have in the end? Disillusionment, and sorrow. Yet, in God, we find All-fulfillment. From the smallest, to the greatest, we will find in Him, and not with uncertainty, but with Peace, and Bliss, and Security. The security of this existence is nowhere else except in God. And to follow the way to the higher life means we must follow that way which enables us to take God with us in everything we do – great, or small. If we would just remember that from this morning's talk, we will be secure and safe in our efforts to find Him.

So, the goal of life, as I have said, is to unite our consciousness with God. But the old idea was, well, when you get through with this existence and die, so to speak; then perhaps, you will find God. Who wants to wait that long? Why not find Him now? That's what it means. That's what our Master said: "The goal of life is to unite your consciousness with God's Consciousness," right now! Soul hunger must be appeased. Soul hunger must be appeased. You cannot, if you do not appease it, you'll be poked by pain, and disillusionment, and all sorts of things, until finally, in despair, you give up and say, "Lord, here I am. Do what you want with me." These are facts. And those who will testify to the truth within themselves will say these things are true.

And so, remember the goal of life is to unite your consciousness with God's Consciousness. As Master used to say, "We don't belong here at all." "Well," I told him, "we find ourselves here just the same." But he says, "Your home is not here. Your home is with God, with your Father." But the wonderful thing is you can have that right here, while you're living in this existence. If you cannot do that, then you have missed the goal of life. God is attainable. He sends the saints to tell us that, and assure us that, that He is attainable. They point the way, if we follow them. That's the way to the higher life – to follow the way of Jesus, and the Great Ones, and the Masters, and then we will find it.

And so, as Master used to say, "Millions and millions never think of God." No concern about Him at all. But look at the trouble they're in. Look around the world and see what's going on. Two World Wars right in our lifetime, and the mess that follows it. Why? Because they do not think of the Giver; they've forgotten the Giver. All God asks us is to not forget Him. What else should He ask? He's got everything! But He hasn't got our love, and that's what He wants. And He knows, if we do not forget Him, His Love, the Greatest Force in the Universe will draw us all back to Him; and then we'll be safe, and secure, where we belong. Not in this outward, worldly existence.

From Master's Science of Religion: "It is a great pity," he writes, "that men will spend their best efforts and time in securing what is needed for worldly existence, or in indulging intellectual controversy over theories, but seldom seem to think it is worth their while to realize and patiently experience in life the truths which not only vivify, but impart meaning to it." That was a long sentence, wasn't it? I didn't know whether I'd get through that or not...but I've seemed to. So it ends: "Misguided efforts often engage their attention longer

than well-guided efforts.” And so, there we have Master’s own words, which are very helpful, and always go so much to the point.

And so, Self-Realization Fellowship teaches, teaches the highest principle of Spiritual living. If you follow the Self-Realization teachings, not the outward form, but the Spirit of the Master and the Great Ones, which is inculcated in the teachings, then you will be following, as I have said, the highest principle – “The Way to a Higher Life.” And what is that highest principle? It is true renunciation – true renunciation – that’s all. True renunciation simply means, following, for instance, the example of Lahiri Mahasaya, that Great Lahiri Mahasaya who, even though he was in the world, subject to the cares of family, and all the distractions, still, in the privacy of his own home he worshipped and felt the Presence of God. He practiced true renunciation.

What is a true renunciate? One who, in whatever he is doing, he takes God with him, that’s the first thing. Or in other words, he works to please God no matter whether it’s making a bed, or taking care of the house, or going to the school, or the office. Whatever it is, do it to please God. That’s the first requisite.

And the second, which, of course, is important, and we’re apt to forget it at times, is that when he is not busily engaged in outward activity, he is silently communing with God in meditation. Now, you can do that. You do not have to wait until you can get right in your little corner, and the bells have stopped ringing, and the children have stopped crying. No! You have to commune with God in spite of the children crying, and in spite of the bells ringing. Of course, some time of solitude is necessary. It’s necessary to do that, because we have to have those times to give us that little extra push. It’s difficult, but, if you use all your moments of leisure, so to speak, after your daily activity, if you use all that time just to feel God with you, and then in those moments of meditation, dive deep, you cannot help but follow “The Way to a Higher Life.” You will win, without question of a doubt.

And so that’s, that’s true renunciation, realize that. There’s a great mistake in renunciation. Not all can go to a monastery, or to the Himalayas, or any of the mountains around; and there find God in that particular way. They’re not constituted that way. But everyone, everyone can follow the way of Lahiri Mahasaya and the way of true renunciation. Because, if you go to a monastery, and you do not follow this Law of Renunciation, you’ll be no better off, because there in that monastery, or in the mountain cave, so to speak, the troubles will still be there. You have to fight it, right now, wherever you are. Then, wherever

God puts you, who cares? We know He's pleased and satisfied. That's the right attitude toward renunciation.

It's wonderful for those who can be free from worldly duties and go to a place where they think only of God, and do those things. That's the greatest thing. But you have to be constituted that way, and you have to have a certain karma to be able to do it. But God is not like that. He says, "All, all of My children, all can come to Me. All can, if they follow the correct way – the way of Jesus and the Great Ones and the Masters – they can find Me." Because we're all His children, and we all have equal opportunity to receive His Love, and, and, as I have often said, the only duty we have to do in this existence, is our only business, is to love and delight in God. Well, I think it can be done in this worldly existence. I'm sure it can be. And there are many in this room who are finding that out. But you cannot do it, if you forget God. And you cannot do it, if you do not meditate, and make the contact with God. Feel His Presence, and receive His Love. All those who receive the Love of the Infinite Father, they are the Sons of God.

And so, the way is clear. But the thing is, as our Master used to say, "I can tell you what to do, but you have to do it." You can read how to do it; you can follow the teachings of Self-Realization, to my mind, to my way of thinking there are none better, because they were given by one who knew God, and was with God, and lived with God; you can read them; but unless you put them into practice, and really make the effort to commune with God, you will not reach the goal.

So remember, you have to do your part – 25% your part. Think of it, only 25%. Twenty-five percent through the agency of the channel of God, in this case our beloved guru, and his teachings; 50% by the Grace of God. That's why humbleness is so necessary – true humbleness – true purity of heart is absolutely necessary. Then, when you want God and God alone, then He easily does it for you. But He will not do it, until you have one desire; and that's for Him and for Him alone.

Master puts it this way in his little book, The Master Said: "No matter which way you turn, the compass its needle points to the north. So it is with the true yogi," the true renunciate. "Immersed he may be in many outer activities, but his mind is always on the Lord." If you can somehow just reach that state, it's the most wonderful state. They can do what they want to with you – misfortune can come – but, if the Lord is with you, you can surmount any and every

difficulty. And so, Master goes on: "His heart constantly sings, 'My God, my God, most lovable of all – God, God, God.'" These are wonderful things.

There's your answer. I need not even go any further than these few words. But I see I have to use a little more time, of course, to make it a Sunday service, and all those things. It reminds me of the little boy whose mother said to him, said, she said, "Why, why...what are you going to be when you grow up?" He said, "I'm going to be a minister." If I'd gotten a hold of him I'd have told him a few things to avoid being a minister. But anyway, he says, "I'm gonna be a minister." He had to go to church every Sunday and sit there whether he liked it or not. And she says, "Why? Why are you going to be a minister?" "Well," he says, "I can see that I've got to go to church for the rest of my life, and I'd rather be up there telling them something than sitting there receiving it."

So there you have it. We have a right to pick the best thing. And so, if you have to endure it, be in the best place until you find the Lord, and then you won't care whether you're there or here – makes no difference.

Now, Spirituality, or the higher life, cannot be bought. It has to be earned – that's the thing. Belief is not sufficient. Belief is not enough. We have to have – by deep devotion and meditation – we have to increase our cup of perception to receive God. There's no question, God is giving out, and will give out more than you can hold. But our cups are small, and so we have to – by discipline, right meditation – we have to increase the cup of perception so we can hold Him. God's Body is not small. God's Body, as we consider a body, our own body, consists of Creation, all Creation. That's the Body of God. But in that, in that is His Consciousness as the Christ Consciousness.

And so, God's Body is Christ Consciousness, and we have to increase our cup of perception to hold Christ Consciousness. We can do it, because we are rays of God; we are made in His Image. But we have to do that. We have to increase our cup of perception. We have to be able to hold God, "to hold Him in the length and the breadth and the height and the depth. We have to be able to hold God in His everlastingness," as one great saint said. "In His breadth is the great love; in His height, as His power and might; and in His depth, as His wisdom." That's what we have to be able to do. Now, we cannot do that unless we contact God, and receive His Consciousness, and become as He is: All-pervading throughout this Universe. But it can be done. That's the secret of this existence is to unite your consciousness with God's Consciousness. Then, as He holds all, so we also can hold all. Now, we cannot do that ourselves, but God can do it.

He can easily do it. We have to fulfill our 25%. But God easily does the rest of it, and He alone can do it. That's why the saints all say 50% is the Grace of God; 50% is His Great Gift to us, if we but give Him a chance to do these things.

And so, God can give us overabundance. But can we receive it? How much can you receive, right now, as you introspect yourself? But in meditation, you will find your consciousness expands so you can receive whatever God gives you. It says that right in our own scripture, in Malachi, the 3rd Chapter, the 10th Verse: "...prove me now herewith, saith the Lord [of hosts], if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

There it is for us. The abundance is there. God's Love is there, but we cannot hold it in our little cups. Let us enlarge our cup of perception, expand our consciousness, until we can feel and know that there is no separation between God in ourselves. We are one. We are made in His Image. As one great saint said, "All I can say is, 'God is. Thou and I, never apart. I am He, I am He, blessed Spirit I am He.'" That's what we have to do. That's the way of a higher life. We have to follow the rules to perceive that.

Now, another pitfall along the way to the higher living is this: that after turning toward God, then we begin to want Him to come in our way. We want Him to come in our way – and immediately! We're not gonna wait; we're not gonna, we haven't any patience. That's one of the greatest pitfalls, and that's what I hear most of the time. But God does not come that way. Once in a while, through His Grace, He will come, and you'll know He exists, and you'll know that you are a part of Him. Then you have to wait perhaps, a long time for Him to answer again. But His Love is never withheld. That's the greatest thing. If you just put your attention inward to His Presence, you'll feel His Love all the time – it's always there. But He may not come and parade in front of you and say, "Here I am." He's not like that.

One great saint said a thing, which I have put down here. I'd like to read it to you at this time. This great saint said: "They want God to appear in front of them as a bright being mounted on a bull." You know something spectacular, something for their own consumption. But this is the key point of his reply. He says: "Such a vision, once originated, must end." Do you see, if God came to you as a little vision or something like that, that's not permanent. That must end. You want God as He is – Wholly, Completely, Unending. That's a wonderful

thing the saint said. But that's what we expect, because we are apt to want God to come as we can understand it.

Why not go direct to God? Go right straight to Him. Of course, you cannot jump right into His Omnipresence, but you can keep Him in your consciousness in everything you do, until finally you become His Consciousness. Whatever you concentrate upon, associate with, you become that. Associate with His Presence as what? As Love. That's the way. God is Love. And then His Omnipresence, through that He will give you all things. So, that lesson which I learned when I read it from that great saint is a wonderful thing. Whatever God creates for you is temporary. So, go direct to Him. Go to His Omnipresence; feel His Love; be one with Him. That's the answer. That's the greatest thing.

St. Theresa said: "I knew the Lord was with me. I didn't see him; I didn't hear his voice; but I knew He was there more than as if I had seen His Form, heard His Voice." Proving this one thing – go direct to God; do not be satisfied with a vision of Him, or such things; do not be satisfied with Him, partially. We must have Him – Wholly, Completely, Fully.

And so, God comes in His Own Way and in His Good Time. But, if you know He's there, if you know you are one with Him, you do not care, as Emerson said: "If the devotee has to realize he has to wait a thousand years, the Soul will gladly wait," because you know, you know God is with you, and you are with Him.

Now, we must want God, or "The Way to a Higher Life" is to follow that path wherein we want God for His Own Sake. This is perhaps, one of the most important points this morning. We want God for His Own Sake, not because He can give us a new house, or a new wife, or anything. We want Him for His Own Sake. Whatever He gives us we accept. But we want God for Him – Himself. We want His Love. That's what wins. He cannot stand; He cannot wait to come to you, if you have that attitude. So, those people who really love God, they are the ones who receive Him. You must really love God. You must want Him for Himself. Then He can give you the best thing for you, and will do that. He will give you what's best for you. This is an important point; let us not forget it – that He comes to those who really want Him, unconditionally, for His Own Self.

Kriya Yoga is the greatest way to take you into the Presence of God. That's why following yoga, Raja Yoga, is the greatest way, because it, at least, takes us into the Presence of God, and then you can tell Him of your unconditional love. If you do that, that means fully surrender to God, that's all; if you do that, He

cannot resist, and He will not resist. Would you resist your own child if he stood before you under those conditions? How much more so God must respond. He must respond, if we approach Him in that manner; wanting Him wholly for Himself. Not for what He can give us, but just because we want Him.

And finally, my final point is this: follow the way of true renunciation. Follow the way of Jesus and the Great Ones. They pointed out the way, they pointed out "The Way to a Higher Life." And all of, and all of those are rays of the One Great Consciousness of God. Aren't we all rays of His Presence? The scriptures tell us, the saints tell us. As they accomplished, so can we accomplish. Jesus said that: "The things I do ye shall do, and greater things¹." As they accomplished, so can we. Therefore, why not follow, follow the way they followed. Follow the Master's teaching. He was one with God, completely, fully. He loved God in such a way. I remember I used to hear him singing up at Mt. Washington, late in the night, early in the morning, about Divine Mother's Love, and how he wanted it, and how he couldn't find that here on earth. Why? That's why he received, because he wanted that. He wanted Her – he wanted God's Love.

And secondly, do not depreciate yourself. Do not depreciate yourself in the way the old orthodox religion used to carry on. What of it, if we are sinners? Who put us in this place? Who created the Cosmic Dream in which sin exists? No! We are children of God. As Abraham said to Lot, "Are we not all brothers?"² And so, are we not, each one of us, a child of God? And as such, we are entitled, if we really want it, that's all, no matter what the past has been – who cares? I don't want to know mine. I wouldn't want to look at it. I'm satisfied with the little of this life. But I do feel, and I know you all feel, that we, as brothers and sisters, are one with Omniscience of God, are entitled to that, to His Love.

And so, finally, wake up! Master used to say, "Wake up from the Cosmic Dream. Wake up! Realize what you are!" What are you? Rays of the One Great Omnipresence of God; all His children, made in His Image, and as such, we must have His Love, to which we are fully entitled. And I want to just close by reading the one poem of Master's. One of his, which I get great inspiration from, and I know you all do; and this is the way to the higher life, so to speak. His poem, "God, God, God." God is all. He's in each one of us. If you turn your attention inward, and feel in your heart, you will feel Him vibrating there.

¹ St. John 14:12

² Genesis 13:8

God! God! God!

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

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

When my mind weaves dreams
With threads of memories,
Then on that magic cloth I do embossed:
God! God! God!

Every night, in 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!