

The Stillness Within

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San Diego, 4-28-57

Our subject this morning: "The Stillness Within" – the stillness within.

There's only one way that God can reveal Himself to the human mind and that is through an expansion of consciousness in Spirit perceived in the silence within. If you remember nothing else this morning, remember that one thing. The only way that God can be perceived, or we can know through our consciousness His Presence, is through an expansion of consciousness perceived in the stillness within. No other way. Please remember that. That's why this subject this morning, in the stillness within, is so important, because that's the only way that you are going to know God, or that God is going to be able to impinge His Great Spiritual Presence on your consciousness.

That's why it is so important to meditate in the stillness within. Not meditate with the mind racing hither and yon, but attaining first that stillness, by following the right methods, and in that stillness your consciousness will expand into Spirit, then you will know God. That's the only way, and that's why all other ways, orthodox ways of worshiping God are useless, because He cannot be perceived except when your consciousness expands from this limited duality of consciousness to the Great Ocean of Spirit.

In the stillness within God cries for you, he cries for me, more than you can imagine. These are the Master's own words. He said, "You don't realize how much God loves you, silently and wonderfully, more than you can imagine," he said. Why don't we perceive it? Because we're too restless, our mind is too restless. In the stillness within you can expand your consciousness to His Presence, the Great Ocean of His Spiritual Consciousness, then you will perceive these things.

It says right in Psalms, 46th Psalm, 10th Verse, "Be still and know that I am God." So there you have your answer. It might have said, be still, be still and know God within. It means the same thing. You cannot, with a restless mind running all over the place, you cannot perceive the Presence of God, but in that stillness within you attain the necessary calmness to intercept, so to speak, God's Great Presence. These are wonderful truths. We must realize them. Just realize this one thing. Then carry out your meditation in the stillness within.

And so your own soul is a ray of God's Consciousness. Your own soul is a ray of Spirit. The Master has said, "There is no difference," as I often quote, "between the Bliss Consciousness, which we feel, and God's Consciousness." That means that our own consciousness, wherein we feel the peace – and that we feel that in the silence within – when we feel that, that's God's Presence. It cannot be any clearer, because that Bliss Consciousness that you'll feel right at this moment, if you'll still the waves of the mind, is God's Consciousness. And so right within us we can realize these things. In the

stillness within you will find these things of which I am speaking, and of which all the sages and saints have spoken, and our beloved Master.

I have a little reference which would be appropriate at this time. Many years ago, an English psychologist, F.W.H. Myers, suggested that hidden within us is a rubbish heap, but also a treasure house – right within us. We know there's rubbish there all right, but sometimes in our quiet moments we know that there's treasure there, too. And so he says, "In contrast with psychology that centers its researchers around the subconsciousness, in contrast to that, the new psychology which centers its researchers around," what? – "the superconsciousness, that finds this treasure house."

That unearths this treasure house, so to speak. And where is it found? Where is the treasure house found in the superconsciousness within? In the silence – no other place – in the Conscious Silence. We're silent, of course, when we sleep and subconsciousness comes to the front, but that's of no use. But when we're conscious in the silence within and the superconscious comes out. Then we unearth the treasure house; and what is that treasure house – God's Presence within us. God's Presence as the only reality of this world, or of the worlds to come, is right within us in the silence within.

And so, even in the rush of this worldly hustle and bustle in which we find ourselves, we can, we can find time to know that silence within, and knowing that silence within we can find time to know God. And if you cannot know God in the rush and bustle of this life, then there's something missing, because not all of us can go to the mountains, or to a monastery, and be away from these things. You won't be away from them, but we will think we're away from them, and right in this world in which we find so much testing, so many trials and disturbances and paradoxes, we can, if we organize our lives, we can find time, as the great Lahiri Mahasaya did, and know the stillness within. And knowing that, we can take God with us in every action – yes, every action in this existence which is heading for a, at a great pace now, because God is everything. But we have to organize ourselves, as Lahiri Mahasaya did.

And at this time I'd like just to read a word or two, I'll give you the gist of a word or two, which the Master has written about Lahiri Mahasaya in his Autobiography¹. Day after day, the great Lahiri Mahasaya initiated one or two disciples in Kriya yoga, and in spite of his occupation, and his worldly business, and his family life, he was able to find time to know the silence within and be what he was, one of the most sublime gurus. And he was a worldly man – he was a householder – but he was able to do this, and that's why he was held in such high esteem by thousands throughout India. He was the inspiration of those who find themselves in the world, but they have to rise above it and know God in spite of that. And that's what we should be able to do – and we can do it.

Twenty-five years ago, more than that now, 35 years ago, I wanted to come out and be with the Master, as everybody would like to be. But he kept me back there in Boston. He says, "You stay there." And I stayed there. But he says, "You meditate though." And so I can tell you, you can do it. You can do it in spite of where you are. Don't try to

¹ Autobiography of a Yogi, Paramhansa Yogananda

think you're gonna run off somewhere, because all the troubles comes running after you, too. You'll find that they're there just the same. So he said, "Stay there." So I stayed there. And he says, "I'll tell you when you can come." And so after 25 years he said, "Now you can come." I was half dead, but I found out the lesson he wanted me to learn. And then it was easy after that.

So God knows what's best for us through the channel which He has sent, and let us realize that. And Lahiri Mahasaya – oh yes, I was going to finish with what he said. In spite of all these, his business and family troubles – of course, he didn't have as much as we have, but nevertheless, he must have had some – in spite of all that, he conducted weekly classes in the study of the Gita², and it was known as the "Gita Class." And many, many attended that, and, as I have said, he was a great inspiration to people who needed that, because we all cannot run away. We have to find God right where we are.

And he closed by saying these words. He said, "Earning only a modest salary, thrifty, unostentatious, accessible to all" – he freely gave himself to all – "the Master carried on naturally and happily in the path of a disciplined worldly existence."

That's the key. You have to discipline yourselves. You can find time for God, if you discipline yourself. If you don't, you'll never find time for Him. But we have to – especially in this world. We have to discipline ourselves and save time for God in spite of all other things. Then you'll win. And we've got to win this battle. We've got to find God somehow. Let's do it now. Why wait? What's that sign used to say, "Why wait, eventually you have to do it, why not now?" So why not find God now?

Now, the Master used to admonish us this way: "Never lose your calmness," he said. "Never lose your calmness. The saints never lose their calmness." Why – because, if you lose your calmness, God isn't there. Unless you can retain your calmness through all conditions, unless you do away with the restlessness of the mind, God will not be found. You can write that right down, because God is in the silence within, not in this duality of consciousness with its mental restlessness. The mind, the lake of the mind must be calm, if you are to find God.

And so it requires loving attention. Realize that. As you sit to do your meditation, you must have loving attention. Then, with that loving attention, the calmness will come which will enable you to enter the stillness within. You cannot enter the stillness within with your mind racing hither and yon. It's impossible, because the stillness is just what it means to you. There's lack of movement. There's lack of outward motion of this worldly consciousness, and there's lack of motion in the unconscious mind, in the subconscious mind, unconscious mind. Things are going on deep within us in that rubbish heap, of which I spoke, and it's hard to still that movement. But, if you have loving attention for the Presence of God within you, as you meditate, as you look at the Christ Center, look with loving attention. It's very important, because God cannot be perceived unless you have that loving attention, because you've got to want Him before the calmness comes which is necessary to penetrate, or intercept, the stillness within, the

² Bhagavad Gita

Immaculate Stillness within, because everything is there. Divine Mother is there. God the Father is there. Everything is in that Immaculate Stillness within, because everything comes out of that, everything worthwhile for your return home back to God. It's in that Immaculate Stillness within, and it's necessary to be calm to intercept it.

It's like in your radio, or your television; the rate of vibration has to be just right. Then the picture comes. If it isn't, you get distortion. So right within us we have to have, we have to be in attunement with the Presence of God, and that comes through calmness first. That's why the Masters were so, laid so much stress to attention – and especially loving attention. The Master used to keep telling me, "Have loving attention, have loving attention, have loving attention." I didn't realize what he meant at first, but I found out later that's very important; and the great ones stress the matter of attention.

I remember reading in the Autobiography – perhaps some of you remember it – that when his Master used to talk to them, and he found their attention wavering, slipping off, he stopped the discussion. That's how much he – what stress he laid on attention. The Master wasn't quite as severe with me as that. But he'd be talking to me, and I'd be listening, and "Yes, yes." But my mind might be wandering off. He'd take my lapel and pull it. Back I'd come into attention. I'd listen. Then he'd pull it again. I found that my attention was not there – my attention was wandering.

It's very important. If you want God, for heaven's sakes, how can you have Him unless you really want Him with loving attention? And so, when you meditate you'll find it hard to keep your mind focused at this point [Doctor points to the point between the eyebrows] – we all do, everybody does, if they didn't they wouldn't be normal. But if you have loving attention for Him, and He really means something to you, you can keep focused at this point. Then it's much easier. And we have to win that battle. We have to win that battle of overcoming the restlessness of the mind. That must be done. Otherwise, we will not know God. Calmness is very essential.

I remember one time I got into difficulties – I think it was in the stock [market]. I was in difficulty most of the time for awhile, and by the Grace of God, it's not so bad now. But I was in difficulty, and I came home, and it wasn't all my fault - the Master was in with me, we were trying to help the work in the beginning. So I came home, and I was all shaking, and I said, "Unless we do something Sir, we're gonna lose all we have." He says, "Is that so?" Didn't ruffle him a bit, and so the next day the things went up a little, and we got out somewhat. And I said, "Sir," I said, "I wish I had your calmness and to be able to retain the calmness which you do under these conditions." He said, one thing I've never forgotten, and I hope you all will never forget it, "Remember Doctor," he says, "the same Father who protects me protects you. He is our common Father." Isn't that wonderful?

Why not, why should we be in trouble all the time? Because we do not trust God enough; we do not realize Him enough, I should say. We do not have the calmness enough to intercept His Presence in the stillness within. And, if we are calm, and if we have contact with God, then we have His Presence, and we have all the resources which

He has, because we're part of Him. It's so difficult to realize that. We think God is there, and we're here. No. He is the whole business, the whole consciousness, the Sole Doer, and we're a part of Him, if we can but realize that, and remove the idea of separation from God. And so we're not separated from God.

And so on this path of realization of the inner stillness is naturally beset by many obstacles. Environment, you know, and environment is. It seems, sometimes our environment is pulling us always away from God. That's so. Latent impulses are there, and worldly desires. These things are all there. But in spite of those things, in spite of those things we've got to win this battle of restlessness of the mind, because our Master has said, "If the lake of the mind is stilled and calm, we've overcome the restlessness, there is God. There is your stillness right before you." But without that calmness, or with that restlessness of the mind, it's impossible to intercept the high vibration of the Presence of God in the stillness within. We must do that, we must overcome this restlessness.

And so restlessness is going on all around us – everything is hustle and bustle. We have, what is it now, we have moons flying around the earth. What do they call them? I think they're called Sputniks, aren't they, or something like that? Sputniks, and I was reading in the paper the other day, Sputnik, and it said, the Sputnik Sundae in the drugstore, Sputnik Sundae. So we were talking last night and someone said, well wouldn't it be funny singing that other song, "Underneath the Silvery Sputnik?" And I said, yes, there used to be a song "Sputnik Over Miami," "Moon Over Miami."

And so that's what we're in now; restlessness, movement, moons flying around, and that's just the beginning. But worse than these physical moons flying around are these things which keep our mind upset and disturbed, and the restlessness has to be overcome. But it can be overcome, and thank God that He did send channels like our beloved Master, to give us the ways and means whereby we can feel the calm of His Presence within. In that stillness within, feel the Presence of God. These things are real. We have to do them. Otherwise, you'll never, never know God as He is.

107th Psalm, 28th and 29th Verse – most beautiful, "Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." Isn't that wonderful? It couldn't be any clearer. Just what we teach in Self-Realization, what the Master has left us, is to be still, still the waves of the mind. Do that. Still the waves of the mind, and then you will be free from your distresses, because distress and trouble is in this outward consciousness, not in your own stillness within. It cannot stay there. It is not there. So remember this Psalm. That God will still, His Great Power will still your restlessness. I don't care how restless you are, He will still that, if you want Him with loving attention. But if you don't, it's impossible. So let us want God as the greatest thing we need, with the love of our hearts, which is His Presence within us. Then He will still the storm of restlessness.

Now Self-Realization Fellowship gives us the ways and the means to still this storm of restlessness by its many techniques. Some of you know them, some of you are members,

its highest technique of concentration, the simple technique. But when you do it, what happens? You still the storm of restlessness. And I've seen people come that are so restless that they couldn't sit still – jumping up and down like jumping jacks. They do this highest technique of concentration – in a few days you wouldn't know it was the same person. Why – because the power of God stills the waves of restlessness of our mind, and then we can perceive His Presence, in the stillness within.

And of course the great technique of Kriya yoga does it in a highly scientific way, and no impurities, no restlessness can stay in you after you perform those techniques with loving attention. Attention is very necessary, especially loving attention.

And in Isaiah, 30th Chapter, 7th Verse, most wonderful words, "Their strength is to sit still." You didn't realize in the Bible there were these wonderful things. "Their strength is to sit still," because then God can come in. But if you're all over the place, especially in your mental consciousness, how can God come in? He cannot come in. "Their strength is to sit still. " Now do you realize how important it is, the stillness within, because there's God's Power. There's your strength. Not in your outward powers of mind and intellect. I don't care how great an intellect you have. If you don't have God, there's nothing to it. But if you have even no intellect, but in the stillness within you feel His Great Presence, then you have everything. Now isn't that a wonderful verse? "Their strength is to sit still," and that means of body, mind, and soul. And I have seen even very nervous people come and do these techniques, and really want God, and I have seen them change, and become calm and collected. That's what the Master has left for us, and that's what the Master has left for all who will do these things with loving attention.

And so finally, winning the battle of restlessness and attaining the stillness within will give us the calmness so that we will realize our own true nature. We're not going to find something that we've got to search out – it's right within us. Our own true nature is what – Ever-conscious, Blissful, Eternal Existence. The Presence of God is within us. That's our true nature. If we but win this one battle, the battle of restlessness of this mind which is running us instead of we running it – who can deny it? Who can deny it? You get up in the morning, you start out – who leads the way? The habits of your mind and your restlessness, unless you have practiced and really mean business with God, then it's reversed. And so we have to win this battle – what for? In the stillness within we'll find our true nature, which is peaceful, and blissful, and in which we find all fulfillment.

I have never found it in outward things. I used to have a craze on buying automobiles, in the earlier days, and I used to buy them all the time. I'd get this one, I'd say, "This is it." Wasn't long there was something wrong with it. So I'd get another one. "This is it." And the first thing, that wasn't right. That went on until I said, "Well, the trouble isn't in the automobile, it's in – with me."

And so it is we have to win that battle of finding out that we want not automobiles, not hats, not houses, but God. And we really want Him with loving attention, and then He'll give you the houses, He'll give you the hats, He'll give you the automobiles, but in a different way. He's with you, and I think He says, "I enjoy them, too." God is a very

Great Fellow, but we have to want Him with loving attention, and in the stillness within, find Him.

And I'm going to close by reading just a word or two which Master has written, from his little book, The Master Said. Most wonderful, "The temple of God is within your soul." "The temple of God is within your soul. Enter into this quietness, and sit there in meditation with the Light of intuition burning on the altar. There is no restlessness there." The restlessness is out here, "There is no restlessness, no searching no striving there." These are facts. Those who meditate will tell you these things. There's no striving there, no stress. "Come into this temple that was not created by man. Eternal in the heavens."

Come into that temple. It's there. It's Reality. It's the only Reality. This is not reality here. Those who have meditated will tell you so. And all those who meditate deeply know that to be true. So the Master says, "Come into this temple. Come into the silence of solitude and the voice of God will talk with you." The Voice of God who created universe upon universe will talk to you through your intuition, or audibly. That's why we should know these things, the silence within. "And you will know that the invisible has become Visible." That Kingdom of heaven of which Jesus spoke, "My kingdom is not of this world," that becomes visible. "The invisible becomes Visible, and the unreal becomes Real." Where – in the silence within.