

Do We Have Free Will?

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I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for your efforts in behalf of the Chapel at Encinitas. It's coming along nicely. Of course, I don't want to leave anyone out that wants to give. We still can use it. But when it is finished, we want you to come down, and enjoy it with us. It's coming along nicely, as I said. We needed a little something for the carpet, and I'm sure we're going to get that carpet. But don't hesitate, if you feel like giving some more, it's all right. We're gonna get the carpet, and you're gonna come down and enjoy it. But I don't want to keep anyone out. Give them the opportunity.

And, of course, the Friday night meeting here in India House at 8:30. I was going to say when I made the announcement last week, one of the gentlemen came up, and put his arms around me. He says, "That's fine." So I want you to know how much the gentlemen think of some of you ladies. They're wives, and so forth. So when you come, you must remember that the men have great spirit. We, as men, have the power of will, and they exercise that will in those meetings, so don't come dragging in. Come in strong. Then you'll be like we are, perhaps more so.

So I was very happy that we can do this, and I know that, if you come with that Spirit of the Master's Love in you, I know that His Presence of the Great Omniscience of God is there, and you all will be helped. Now let us do our part for this work of Self-Realization.

The subject this morning, "Do We Have Free Will?" Do We Have Free Will?

Yes and no. We have perhaps free will in the concrete – but in the abstract, no. From some conditions, we think we have free will, and really we have no free will.

I remember an incident comes to my mind about a gentleman I used to visit in my younger days, and we used to discuss metaphysical things. I had met the Master, and I was quite enthused, having these eternal truths presented to me, and so I started on this gentleman, and I told him, I said, "You are not what you think you are at all. You think you are this body, and so forth, and you think you have free will, and you haven't any free will at all."

And I was talking along that line of thought – suddenly he says, "Say," he says, "if I'm not myself, who in thunder am I?" So we – he was a little more emphatic – but that's. . .you have the idea. He was real serious. "Well," I said, "that's right, because we really do not know who, or what, we are." And so this subject of "Do We Have Free Will" is very important.

Now as we play our part in the Drama of Life, we do have free will. For instance, God gives us the free will, and the free choice, to accept Him, or accept His gifts – does He not? Yes, we have free choice in that. But when God withdraws His Great Creation back into Himself, we don't have any free will. We have to go back in, whether we like it or not – unless, unless, we have exercised our true free will while in the Drama of Life, and lifted our consciousness out of the Delusion – the Maya,. Then we don't have to go back. We're already with Him.

So remember those two points as we discuss this subject "Do We Have Free Will?" In the concrete, yes. In the immediate, yes. If I want to go out this church, I can go out that door, or I can go around and talk to you all, and go out this way, and finally go out the door. I have free will in the concrete. But it is thoroughly established that I am going out the door.

Just like we're going back to God – consciously, if we can, if we're wise. We're going back anyway, because we came out of God. Just like your own dream. You create your own dream out of your own consciousness – do you not? And when you break the dream – where are you – back in your own consciousness. While in the dream, you have free will to play a part, or, if you don't like the part, replace it by another part. You have a little free will there. But when the dream is resolved, you're back with your own consciousness.

So it is with God. When this Drama of Life is dissolved in His Great Omniscient Consciousness, we all have to go back there, because we're a part of Him. So there's certainly no free will in that aspect of it. But, the free will given to us is, that we accept Him, or reject Him. In accepting Him, then we are lifted up out of the Delusion of Dream Consciousness into the Unity of God's Presence. So that is the point to remember. We cannot say, "Yes, we have free will." But we can say, "Yes, and no" – in one aspect, a sort of free will, as I will try to point out.

In the other aspect, God is the Sole Doer. He is in each and every one of you. Your ego has very little free will. The only free will that we have, and that's why

we have been given free will, is that we get out of this Delusion, this Maya. As Lord Krishna said, "Every man walketh the world [wholly] deluded. Get out of my Maya. Get out of my delusion." Now, if you use your free will in that aspect, that's wonderful, because then you rise above Duality of Consciousness into the Unity of God's Omniscience. His One Reality is God Alone. God is the Sole Doer. If we use our will that way, then we are exercising free will.

Now there are two kinds of free will. This is very important. There was one kind called "ordinary free will." I have called it "the do as I please" free will. You get up some morning; you start out; you say, "Today I'm gonna do just as I wanna. I'm going to do just as I please." But are you? That's the point. Are you? You walk down the street; the latent impulses within you come up; and they begin to suggest this and that; and you react to your environment according to the dictates of those latent impulses within you, and habit. And so you go by the bakery, and you look in the window. Why? "I'm going to do just as I want to today. I'm going to have that big chocolate pie." And last night you had a bigger one, and you don't need that chocolate pie at all. But the impulse says, "Oh, my. Isn't that wonderful?" Habit says, "You always eat those. Eat it."

All right, are you exercising free will? No. You're being guided by the environment, the latent impulses within you, and habit. That isn't free will. That is what is called "automatic will." You see? Now, if you'd seen that cake and you walk right by, used the wisdom within you, Soul Guidance, you'd have said, "I had that last night, that isn't right." So that's real free will, as I will point out.

But "ordinary free will" is "automatic free will." Now the next time you go by that bakery window, remember this. Of course, don't all do it, because the man won't have any business, and we're not here to do that. We're here to help one another. So what can I say, I can just point out the facts – that if you do that, you're exercising ordinary, automatic, free will. You see what I mean? Your action is automatic. And most everybody acts that way. Most all people act according to the dictates of their environment. That is they react to the environment from the latent impulses within, and those impulses are set up from following sensation, thoughts, and memory thoughts.

And so your action, in ordinary free will, is an automatic action, dictated not by you at all, not by you at all, but by environment, latent impulses, and tendencies, and habits, and these have all been done before, so that that is not free will. True free will, that's automatic, or ordinary free will.

Now, as I have said, you didn't decide what you were going to do at all, but it was decided for you in a very subtle way. You didn't know anything about it. Up came these impulses – you need that cake. And

you can't resist while you're in that state of lower consciousness. Now, ordinarily, we live, as I said a few moments ago in the Bible reading, in the three lower Centers of the spine. That's where the reactions take place. That is, you feel, not with your fingers, but you feel, in the inner part of you. You taste inside. And you hear in the Spiritual part of you within. That's known. So, most of us live in the three lower Centers of the spine, in that consciousness, and that's more or less automatic.

So that as long as we are in that, we are acting automatically, according to the law of cause and effect karma – we keep laying up these new impulses. And as long as you stay there, you're in Delusion. And as long as you go by that bakery window, and you succumb to those latent impulses within you, you lay up more. You understand?

How we ever gonna get through with it? That's a very important thing. It's like the snowball, as you roll it along, it – you don't have snow here, but back East we have snow, see. . . I shouldn't have brought that up. . . this is California. . . but, nevertheless, just now that I've started – you roll the snowball, and it picks up snow. So, as we live in this automatic consciousness, being subject to the latent impulses within us, and habits, reacting to our environment, we keep adding new, new, latent impulses. So it's very difficult to get out of the Delusion of Duality of Consciousness. That's why it says in the [Bhagavad] Gita, “Of a thousand who hears, one follows, and of a thousand of those that follow, one gets it.” One gets freedom, because of this automatic action of laying up new, new, impulses – new habits, by following desire. So you must be careful. And, remember, that, if you want to exercise true free will, it must not be an automatic action. We must not be automatons, following the dictates of habits, emotions, latent impulses within us.

So that brings us to the next subject: is true free will, true free will? Now, if you lift your consciousness – as we try to do in these meetings – from the three lower Centers of the spine, which are concerned with ordinary worldly activities – there's nothing, there's nothing mystical about it – if you lift your consciousness from activity there to the higher Centers of the spine, then instead of you being subject to the latent impulses within you, and habits, and acting on your environment, then you bring in a different consciousness altogether. You act from the Higher Consciousness, or Soul Consciousness. And it is not automatic action. You understand? It is independent action.

So every time you do a good thing, every time you go by that window and lift your consciousness up, and reason from wisdom's side, and pass by – that's independent action. And when you do that, you're using true free will, because you are not subject to the dictates of worldly consciousness laid up by following sensation, thoughts, and memory thoughts, but you're following the dictates of your Soul

Consciousness. Now that's independent action, when you do that. That is true free will, and that leads to true freedom.

When you follow automatic action there's no freedom. It never comes, because you lay up more impulses. They keep you down on that level. But when you lift your consciousness, and react from Soul Consciousness, do independent action, not automatic action, you do real, constructive, independent action from the higher vantage point of Soul Consciousness – that's true free will, and with that you progress.

You do not progress by following automatic action. Those of you who know that – you know. Those of you who play the piano, or a musical instrument, if you play automatically, you play automatically. But until you make the definite effort to do some constructive practicing with independent action, you don't progress. And so it is, with true free will. True free will comes by following the dictates of higher Soul Consciousness – acting independently – not automatically, by following habits, impulses, and environment.

So just to briefly go over ordinary free will, and true free will. Remember, that ordinary free will is automatic in action, and is the results, not of independent action, but the suggestions, the impulses given from your subconsciousness to your waking state of consciousness from latent impulses, habits, and those tendencies, which you have laid up – some of them long, long ago. That is not true free will. While ordinary, that's ordinary, automatic, free will.

While true free will is independent action, not influenced by these latent impulses, habits, moods, emotions, and so forth – but influenced by the Wisdom of the Soul. Now that's the important thing to remember. And every time you meditate, especially when you come home tired, you say, “Well, I had a hard day. I guess the Lord will excuse me tonight.” No. But, if you sit up in spite of your tiredness, that's real independent action – and you progress. That's real true free will. And by doing that, you not only exercise true free will, you gain true freedom. By following your impulses, environment, and habits, you do not gain freedom. Don't you see? You don't.

You think, “I'm going to buy that cake today, because I want to buy it.” That isn't free will. The impulse is within you. If you want to buy that cake to give to some sick person, that's another thing. But when you follow the impulses within you and say, “I'm going to do just as I please today.” But you're not. You're gonna follow those little impulses that are comin' up and suggesting to you, “you wanna have that cake.

. .you've work hard, why shouldn't you have that cake as well as your next door neighbor?" Those are impulses feeding us. That's automatic action. That is not true free will.

So there you have in a few moments the difference between ordinary free will and true free will. One is automatic – one is independent action.

Now, comes the question – I notice on my notes – how, how to escape, how to escape being an automaton. Nobody likes to be an. . .who wants to be fooled? No one does. But we're fooled all the time, until we wake up. Then we realize that we were fooled. So, how to escape this being an automaton, and being a slave to automatic action.

There's one, one answer, one answer. Lord Krishna says, "Get out of my delusion." Get out of the Dream Consciousness, which is filled with paradoxes and inequality. God contact is the answer. If you have God contact, what do you have? Then, then, you have the Wisdom of the Soul. Don't you see? In ordinary action, ordinary free will, you do not act from the Wisdom of the Soul, but from these tendencies, which you've laid up from action, from sensation, and thought.

But with God contact – and by that I mean, working from the three upper Centers of the spine, especially from the Christ Center, which is the Will Center – you use that Center to unite your will with God's Will. But that isn't enough. You have to Feel in your heart, you have to Feel that Love of God. That completes the circuit. Now, if you can do that, you'll act independently, because you'll be acting from God in you, or the Soul Consciousness within.

Now comes the question – and the boys often ask me, "Well what's gonna happen, if we don't have that God contact, until we get that?" That's right. That's a good question. Now what do you think I told them? What do you think? Say. What did I tell them? What are you gonna do up to the time we get that contact with God? That's right. Follow the channel. Follow the channel God has sent. See? That's the important thing. Now the channel is Self- Realization, because the Master came with special dispensation to God, because it's very easy to get that soul contact to those who will give a little time and effort. So until you reach that point of acting from God's Presence within you, God communion, God contact, you have to follow the instrument God has sent – do you not? Why? Because that instrument has that God contact, and that instrument's will, as the Master's Will, is united with God's Will, and if you follow His Will, being United with God's Will, then you will see the difference between automatic action, and action from the Higher Point of Soul Consciousness. Now that's a very important point.

I might illustrate it this way. You have a nice car. You drive along, you say, "Good as anybody's." But then you ride in a fellow's Cadillac. "I didn't realize this is a better car." So when you follow the Master, you understand, then you see the difference between your own ordinary free will, and the free will which is Wisdom-Guided, because the Master is One with God. Is that important? Is that point understood now? When you follow the Master, you can see the difference between ordinary free will, and true free will, because the Master, a true Master, is One with God's Great Wisdom. And what he does, and suggests that you do, and the discipline he lays down, if you follow, you will lift your consciousness and will into that Higher Level of Consciousness, and as he has Freedom, so you will have True Freedom.

Now you cannot judge, you cannot compare two conditions unless you pass through them – can you? No more than you can compare the two automobiles until you ride in the better one. And then you say, "Well, this is a better car than I have." So when you follow the Master, with obedience and spiritual discipline, then you will see the difference. And what's the result? You attain the same Freedom which the channel of God has sent to you. So that's a very important thing. That's why a guru, or the channel which he has left, is so important, because it is the channel through which God's Omniscience manifests.

A question comes to my mind which sometimes the boys have asked me, "All right, you were here when the Master was here, and you had personal contact." That's right. But, he told me many times, "When I am gone, you'll find me nearer than when I was with you in body." And I have found that so. God's Omniscience is the Reality. A true Master simply is a channel through which that Omniscience flows. And so the Master is that channel, and when you have removed the impediments, as body, then that channel is more open for you. And so a true Master is One with God's Omniscience. That's the thing which we must realize.

Now in answer to those who say, "Well the Master's gone now," you can say this: "There were many devotees of the Master, great devotees. One comes to my mind, too. St. Francis, who came centuries after Jesus, did he not? One of the greatest devotees of Jesus, the Christ, came years later, even a greater devotee perhaps than his own immediate disciples was St. Francis. St. Teresa was another one who said, "Christ stood beside me, real, more real than if I saw him with the senses. Yes, as if I saw him with the inner spiritual eye."

Now there's no need to say. . . don't let anybody tell you, because the Master isn't here in person, that he cannot be contacted. He's nearer right now, because the Omniscience of God always was, always will be, and you can be one with that Omniscience. That's what a Master is, a channel of God's Omniscience.

Jesus, the Christ manifested Christ Consciousness: Buddha, the Christ, the great ones Christ's – Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, the Beloved Master who manifested Christ Consciousness. Is the personality, is the body the Reality? No. It's the Presence of God in those great ones as the Christ Consciousness that is the Reality.

And so, when anyone says to you, "Too bad I didn't meet the Master, I know I'd been better." No. Don't accept that, because God's Omniscience is the most immediate thing in your consciousness. You couldn't breathe, think, feel, or do anything except His Omniscience is there. But the Master has left the channel. He has left the ways and the means whereby those who follow, those who follow the channel God has sent, will receive, without question of a doubt, the Christ Consciousness in a dynamic way.

The Master said at one of his birthday parties – I remember, when he was upstairs, and over the loudspeaker – he said, "Yes, when I'm gone. . ." First he said, "I want you all to be real Self-Realizationists, stayed in Self-Realization. And when I'm gone," he said, "if you do that, if you're a hundred percent loyal to the channel God has sent, I will reach down from heaven, and lift each one of you up that you'll realize God's Great Love."

You mean to say that you have to have met the Master personally? No. He told me many times – of course that personality attraction comes in the beginning. And I was very much attracted, naturally, because I met him first in Boston. He stayed at our house, and I was very close to the Master.

I remember one thing – I had the great honor of sleeping with the Master, which is considered in India the highest honor. I didn't know. But I was willing for

anything to get me out of the Delusion. Anything. And that's what he told me. But when he left Boston, and saw that I was disturbed, he said, "Never mind what happens to me." Imagine it. "Never mind what happens to me. That Light which you see is far greater than I am. That's God Himself." Now don't you see, that the Reality is God's Omniscience within you, manifesting as the Holy Ghost, with the Light, with the Cosmic Sound, greatest of all with the Love in your heart. Now all you have to do is contact one, or all, of those aspects. There you have God.

Why say, "I didn't meet the Master, too bad." It is too bad, but he is there closer to you now than ever. And in one of his letters I read to the boys last evening, he said, "Remember," he said, "that I am nearer to you, and that I am always with you, and will help you more than you can ever realize." Why? Because he had that Omniscience of God. Now that wasn't just for me. That was for each and every one of you,

who will follow, and unite your consciousness with God's Presence within. When you do that? When you attain contact, God contact, then you will exercise true free will, because where's the Wisdom comes from – not in sensation, not in intellect, not in mind, not in inference and reason, because your reason is determined by all your little habits, and ideas – true wisdom comes from God's Omniscience. So, if you unite your will with God's Wisdom-Guided Will, then you will exercise true free will, by acting independently, in an independent way. Not automatically, but with independence of Soul Consciousness.

So going on just a little bit; to follow the Master, and to bend your will to the channel God has sent, requires greater character and will, than to follow your own little automatic-guided will. Isn't that so? When you bend your will, you feel, "Well. . .who am I to bend my will." No. To bend your will, and follow, with obedience, the Master, or the channel he has sent, requires greater strength of will and character than to follow your own ordinary will. But, by doing that, by doing that, what is the result? The reward is – as I have said – you gain the true freedom, which the Master has, because his Will is Wisdom-Guided by God's, otherwise he's not a true Master.

And what he does to you in the way of discipline, or setting down rules and regulations, which he has set down, those things are to discipline you that you may be able to act independently, exercise true free will, as he has. So when you follow, that's why you gain the great reward of never again being bound by ordinary free will – being bound by automatic action, being born [bound] by the free will of Delusion. No. You are guided by following the Wisdom-Guided Will of God. That's the reward. And when you follow that true free will, Wisdom-Guided Will of God, what do you attain? True freedom – God's Omniscience – the Freedom of God's Omniscience. What can be greater?

Now you see the difference between ordinary free will and Wisdom-Guided Will. To be ever free – and these are facts – to be ever free from the limitations of ordinary automatic will – being pushed here, and there, by these latent impulses, which come up within you, guide your life, and you do the things as St. Paul said, "Those things come to me. I didn't want them to come. They come, I do them." Why? Because your will is not free will, it's automatic will guided by these latent impulses.

And so it is worth it, and those of you who are spiritually disciplining yourselves by following the rules of Self-Realization – do not stop. Be more adamant in your great determination to be obedient to God through the channel He has sent. God doesn't talk to us. He's Silent. But He sends channels, as the great ones, and our Beloved Master.

Now, whomever is obedient to that channel, and spiritually disciplines himself through the regulations and rules and suggestions set down by the Master, he is a wise person. He is a true yogi. As Sister Gyanamata said one time. . . people complained, "Well, I will follow the Master. Whatever he says for me to do I will do, but I won't follow anybody else." Well, that's fine, isn't it? Imagine it. As she told them, she said, "Listen, if he is your guru, why don't you follow him? Why are you here, unless you follow God through the channel He has sent to you?" That's the attitude we should have. That's the loyalty we should have. If we have that, God will respond. But, if we have mental reservations in everything we do, how we ever gonna find God, who knows our very thoughts and emotions? And so spiritual obedience, spiritual discipline, strengthens true free will within us - free will, guided by the Wisdom of God.

One story comes to my mind to show you the great reward of exercising true free will. When the Master first came to Boston, quite some years ago now, in 1922. . . a year after he was there, we went up to North Shore. Those of you who are familiar with Boston, know that in April, it's awful cold up there, damp. But we were going up to a cottage to have a few days. So we went up there. And I was out walking with the Master, and it's bitter cold, that Atlantic is terrible in the spring. I was out walking with the Master, and there's a big breakwater stuck out in the Atlantic Ocean near Plum Island, Massachusetts. He says, "Fine. Nice...(incomplete)