

Guru - The Guide to the Infinite

Dr. M.W. Lewis

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What you have heard is an aspect of God. Great composers feel different aspects of God, and if God wasn't that way, I'm sure we wouldn't want Him.

Everything is in Him, the fullness of God is, and so you have heard in the playing of that piece, a lighter aspect of God's Great Consciousness.

Our subject this morning: "Guru - The Guide to the Infinite," "Guru – the Guide to the Infinite." I hope you'll take due notice of the title, "Guide to the Infinite." "Well," people say, "why do we need a guide? If God is everything, and is supreme, and He is in us, why do we need a guide?" Well, that's pretty good reasoning. But it isn't correct. We do need a Guide to the Infinite, and I hope before I'm through this morning that you will realize why we need the Guide to the Infinite, and why the guru is the Guide to the Infinite.

Now in ordinary life there are times when we do need a guide. When we travel to foreign countries, especially if we do not know the language, or the points of interest, we need a guide, and so we take a guide on those occasions. Some people go hunting and fishing. I guess this – we can put some Self-Realization members in at least the fishing aspect of fishing expedition, and so they need a guide, otherwise, they'd get lost. They're foolish.

That reminds me of a little incident that happened to one of our SRF members. He was fishing. I don't think many hunt, but at least I think some fish. So he was fishing, and he didn't take a guide, and he, he got lost, and he stayed out for a long time. And finally, a storm came up, and it began to rain. He had no protection. It came down in torrents, and he saw a little log, just about big enough for him to get in, and so he crawled in the log – just squirmed in. He was thinking, "Lord, how wonderful you are to protect me, and have this all ready for me." Well, he crawled in the log, and he was comfortably waiting for this tempest to stop, and he began to feel a great compression going on, and the log began to shrink. The wooden log began to squeeze him, and he felt the end had come. And you know when life is nearing the end, they say that all things come before you. And so everything began to come to his mind. And then he suddenly realized how mean he was – he had not paid his SRF dues for his Praecepta, and he felt so small, and mean, and he shrunk right up, and crawled right out of the log. So that, at least, I don't think

he forgot that he needed a guide. So we do need a guide under certain occasions and this occasion is if we travel in foreign countries, and especially go fishing, let us always remember to take a guide.

Now the other reason is this. We need a guide in life, but we need it much more to the Infinite, because the Guide to the Infinite knows the Infinite – knows God. Knowing God, he knows the way. That's one of the great reasons. Having oneness with God, oneness with God's Great Consciousness, he knows about it, and can help you and guide you. You do not know it until you have reached the state of consciousness which your guru has. And so that's why the guru is the Guide to the Infinite, because he knows the way, he's been there.

"Well," you say "that doesn't prove it." No, that's right. The other reason is this. That it is Spiritual Law that we go back to God through the channel of the guru. That's Spiritual Law. It is Spiritually Ordained that you must go to God that way – through the channel He has sent you – and the channel is the guru.

Now at this time let us differentiate between teachers and a guru. We have many teachers. The teachers come from a vague impulse within us to know truth. We have a, you know, lukewarm desire. Then God doesn't deny us. He sends us teachers in the form of books, and the joining of different societies. And the teachers of those societies help us to progress toward the goal of life in a limited way. Remember, they come in response to vague desires. Vague desires to know the truth. But when you really want to know God and mean business, and have a deep, sincere desire within your heart to know Him, then He sends you a guru.

Now there are many teachers. There can be many teachers. Just like if you study violin or organ, you can have a teacher, and then he can take you so far, then you take another one, perhaps, who has gone further. But, in the spiritual aspect of knowing truth, we have one guru. That is Spiritual Law – it is ordained by God. And so, you can see we can have many teachers but one guru, because as we read in our Whispers¹ this morning, "Oh, my guru, Thou the Voice of God." So let us not forget there is one guru – many teachers – but really one guru.

Now the guru comes, as I have said, in response to a deep desire to know God and truth. Not a lukewarm desire. And so those of you who have had that deep desire to know God, and God has responded and sent you the channel back to Him, this channel, which you are enjoying now, the channel of the Master and his teachings, realize that. Realize the importance of it, as I shall try to point out as I go along.

Now we read in the Master's teachings that the guru is sent, or is a vehicle of God, whose body, speech, mind, and spirituality God uses. Not man uses – God uses to bring the lost souls back home to Immortality. Isn't that wonderful? So let us take up first the guru is the vehicle whom God uses. His speech, his body, his speech, his mind, and spirituality to bring the lost souls back to Him.

Now, we remember the Master, and his teachings, and they were the result of his bodily work, his body, his mind, and his speech. And those things God impregnated with His Great Power and Spirit, and He has given those things to us through the teachings which the Master has left. Not only that, it says the Guru uses his body. The Master used his body, completely depleted it, for he often said, "My body is a ransom for many." And many have been helped in many ways of body, mind, and soul through the effort of the guru. So you see there's a little difference between a teacher and a real guru.

Now, the last thing is that God uses the spirituality of the guru to bring the lost souls back home to Him. That's the most important thing. What is the spirituality of the guru? It is his oneness with the Spiritual Consciousness of God. It is his oneness with the Great Christ Consciousness. That's the spirituality of the guru. Now many say, "Oh, the guru is gone. How can he be the guru?" Listen, the Real Guru is in Spiritual Consciousness, is in the Omniscience of God. Now doesn't that last beyond this worldly existence – certainly! That's why the Master said in one of his talks just before he passed on, he said, "To all of those who are loyal to me and to God through the teachings I have left, I will reach down from heaven and I will lift them, that they too feel, and know the Great Love of our Father." Isn't that wonderful? Now you see the difference between a teacher and a guru.

Then take St. Francis. St. Francis came a long time after Jesus was here. I forget, I think it was 300 years. It doesn't make any difference. Jesus had gone, so to speak, from this worldly existence. But St. Francis talked and walked with Jesus as you read in the records. Why? Because he realized that his Real Guru was in Cosmic Consciousness, was in the Christ Consciousness, and that he was always existing, beyond time and space – always was, and always will be. That's Spiritual Law. And so, St. Francis was perhaps a greater devotee of Christ, a better disciple even, if we can say that, than some of the disciples which lived at Jesus' time.

So don't think that just because the guru is not here in body, he is more with us in spirit, because there are no hindrances of bodily consciousness, and a weak body, and so forth, which is ordinary law applying to ordinary living. But the real aspect of the guru is his spirituality, which is beyond this bodily existence. And remember his words, "I will reach down and lift those who are loyal to me" – to God through me, he means – "and to my work that they too know the Father's Love as I know it." So now you have a picture, a comparison between the teacher and a real guru.

Now a guru is ordained by God through Spiritual Law as your guide. Realize that. Sri Yukteswarji said to his, to the Master - and this will show you that it is spiritually ordained, and there is a great difference between a teacher and a guru. He said to our Master, Sri Yukteswarji was his guru, he said, "I shall be your friend forever and ever, because God asked me to bring you home." Isn't that wonderful?

Now to each and every one of us who are loyal to God through the channel He has sent, the guru says the same thing - "I shall be with you forever and ever. I shall be your friend, because God asked me to bring you home." God is Omniscient. He speaks through the channels. And so He has sent us this channel to bring us back home to Cosmic Consciousness. This is the answer. You find God first by finding your guru. It's different than just a teacher. A teacher can tell you many things, but the guru is the one who takes you to God. Let us not forget that. That's Spiritually Ordained, and we must realize that when we really want God, God responds.

Now if God responds, should we forget it, should we overlook it? We should realize that the Master of the Universe, the Great Omniscience of God has responded to us and sent us the channel. Now doesn't that make you want to be loyal to God through the channel? Certainly when you realize the importance of it, what teacher can give you the realization which the guru can give you? No teacher. So the guru is unique. Remember, "Oh guru, Thou the Voice of Silent God." There is one guru - there are many teachers.

Now, we have this referred to in Jesus' words to John the Baptist. You know, John the Baptist was preaching. He took a secondary part compared to Jesus while he was here. And Jesus came with all his glory, because that was in the play, so to speak. That was ordained by God. But John the Baptist was his guru from a previous existence, as many of you have read in our teachings. John the Baptist was Elijah, and Jesus was Elisha. So when he came, John said, "He who cometh after me is far greater than I am. I am unworthy to unlatch his shoes." But Jesus said, Oh no. "No man born of woman is as great as John the Baptist." And so he wanted John to baptize him, and John felt he didn't want to do it. But Jesus said, "This is the way of all righteousness." That is that Spiritual Law that the guru is the guru, and so he suffered, and baptized. Jesus suffered himself to be baptized. It's most wonderful.

If the guru is just for this life, what good is that? The guru is your friend, because God sent that particular channel for you. He is your friend forever until you merge in the Great Oneness and Light of God. Then there's no difference. Everybody, thank God, is equal there, different than in this life. But you have the position that you hold, who you know counts. Not with God. When you're one with His Great Consciousness, we're all equal.

And so there you have in the scripture reference to the fact that the guru is most important, because he's sent directly by God. And I know in my own case that there are many things that the Master showed me, spiritual experiences he gave me, which I have proved by work and long meditation. I know I could not have received them except it came from God through that channel. That I know.

One little incident comes to my mind at Encinitas. He used to come in quite late. Then I used to walk with the Master out in front there – back and forth for a little exercise. So he came in, and I said, "All right, I go to bed now, sir." He says, "Oh, wait a minute. Let's go into the kitchen." So we went into the kitchen, and he cooked a few little vegetables. And I noticed when he was cooking them he had a peculiar look about him – they tasted awful good, those vegetables did, even though it was late at night. And I remember I went down to my room, and as I went in the room, and the whole room was filled with light. So the next morning I told him, or next day when I saw him, I told him my experience. He said, "Yes, I was pretty much in God when I cooked those vegetables." So the guru is the channel of God, there's no question about it. And he is the one who will take us back home to God.

Now one point I must bring up is this – that there are no self-appointed gurus. A real guru is one ordained by another real guru. Like our Master was ordained by his guru, and his Master by Lahiri Mahasaya, and him by the Great Babaji, and Jesus is one with them all. So a real guru is one who is ordained spiritually by

another guru, or else, one who receives the direct word from God to serve and help others back home to Him. Realize that. So a self-appointed guru, don't pay any attention. They must be ordained by God, Spiritually. You cannot just pick it up, or someone give you a title. No. It comes through the channel of God Realization. So that's the difference between a teacher and a real guru. Realize that the guru comes from the response, a real response from God to you, because you mean business with God. You really want Him.

In Daniel [10th Chapter, 12th Verse], when it says, "Fear not Daniel, the moment you set your heart to understand and," begin to discipline yourself, "chasten thyself...I am come for thy words." Right off, right off, the minute that you do that, and the minute you become one with the channel of God, the channel to the Great Omniscience of God, beyond time and space, All Supreme, Powerful, Infinite God, is open to you. Then, right then, that's why you improve right off.

And so it is wonderful, the guru, remember, comes as a direct response from God. Isn't that wonderful? And those who meditate, you meditate and you go deeper, and deeper, and then finally you will see

“the Light beyond the atoms” of which the Master spoke. And then, in that Light you will sometimes see a response of Divine Mother, or God. Then you feel awful good. That’s why we sing the chant, “what lightning flash glimmers in thy face, seeing Thee I am thrilled through and through².” Why not? A direct response from the Master of the Universe, it certainly will thrill you, because that’s the ultimate.

So keep on in your meditations. Keep on following the channel God has sent you, until you get the direct response of God. And you will get it, because, remember, the guru, being one with God’s Omniscience, also is spiritually ordained to help you. That’s the key. Teachers sometimes are not one with God’s Omniscience. But those who are one with God’s Omniscience do God’s Will, nothing else. That’s why they’re real gurus.

Now, this guru-disciple relationship must be built on complete understanding. Complete understanding between the guru and the disciple – uncompromising. Now how can that be, except it is based on one thing, and that’s Unconditional Divine Love. That’s the key. That’s the basis between the disciple, and the guru, and, necessarily, God – Unconditioned Love. No mental reservations. You cannot have any. Otherwise, you might have a mental reservation, and the guru might want to help you in a certain condition, and that mental reservation would interfere, and you’d be lost. That’s why there must be complete, complete understanding; unreservedly, based on the Unconditional Love of God. Isn’t that wonderful?

Now, if you read through the Autobiography³, you will find that when the Master met his Master that he said to him, first, he said, “Will you love me as I love you? Do you love me?” Unconditional Love is the basis. “I will give you everything I have.” Why, because in God, everything is His.

This is not a comparison, but I must tell you when I first met the Master, the first night way back in 1920, Christmas Eve, when I first met him, and came into His presence, what did he say? After a few preliminary remarks, he said, “Doctor,” looking at me with his big eyes filled with God, he says, “will you love me always as I love you?” Imagine it! Right off! Then I saw something. I thought, “Well, this man is different.” Then I felt something, and I said, “Yes sir, I will.” Then he, full of glee, he says, “I take charge of your life.”

So realize the relationship between the guru and the disciple is that based on Unconditioned, Unconditioned Divine Love. And through the many years of discipline, which I took after that first evening, I had to swallow a good many pills. But I did, realizing that there must be a reason for it. The Master must have had a reason to discipline me, and, if I hadn’t had that great feeling of Unconditioned

Love, I wouldn't have taken it. Having that, I took it. What is the result? The result is freedom; freedom from attachment to matter and all such things which limit us. Freedom, because as the Master has that oneness with God's Great Consciousness, His Omniscience, and is free, so the disciple who follows with Unconditioned Love, he too will be free.

And so we come to the end. What is the reward of following a real guru? It is this – that the disciple is never left alone. He is always protected. Isn't the Omniscience of God enough to protect each and every one of us? Well, the guru has that Omniscience. We are never left alone. I've told you the story about Plymouth when I was caught out in the storm, and the Master knew it right off. Why – because the disciple is never left alone; never left alone, always protected. What good is the guru unless he protects you under all conditions? The guru having oneness with God's Omniscience knows where the disciple is; knows what he is doing; watches over him. That's the first thing that comes from the true guru's discipleship – Master's discipleship.

Secondly is this, that when you contact a real guru, you have no more blind spiritual gropings. Do you see? You follow this teacher, that teacher, you're not satisfied. But when you follow the guru, he being one with God, then the soul is satisfied, and then you do not spiritually grope anymore, because you know God will take care of you and will speak to you through the guru.

That takes me to the last point – what is the reward of following a true guru, the Voice of God, really? It is that you attain true freedom. If you allow your will to be united with the guru's will, who is one with God's Unconditioned Will, Unlimited Will, then you, too, attain that Unlimited Will of the Infinite. Having that, you have true freedom, because as the guru realizes one with the Infinite – this is the key now, this is why he should be your guide – the guru is one with the Infinite, you, following him with Unconditioned Love, unreservedly, completely, you too attain the same freedom which he has. But remember, it must be a true guru. And so uniting your will with the will of a true son of God, as our Master, then what happens? Then your Spiritual Eye is opened – your Spiritual Eye of wisdom and intuition is opened, and you are taken to the Infinite.

And so, in conclusion, I'd like to just read what the Master has said concerning those who wish to follow Self-Realization Fellowship one hundred percent, and be loyal to the guru, this is what you can expect. I can tell you in my own words, I'd like to read it so that you have it just from the Master.

"If it is your desire to follow the path of Self-Realization one hundred percent, giving unconditional devotion and loyalty to the link of the Masters, if you do this willingly, from your heart, without any

mental reservation, and you then you will automatically become a link in the divine chain established between the guru, the disciple, and the great ones."

Then, if you do that, if you remove all obstructions so that God can work through that chain of which you are a link, then you will receive their help, their guidance, and their wisdom, and as they are one with the Infinite, and our Master is one with the Infinite, so you, too, without question of a doubt, if you follow their guidance, you, too, will be one with the Infinite.

Closing Meditation

Let us just meditate, just a moment that we do not come down from our lofty state in God's Presence. Feel, feel His nearness. Feel His All-embracing Love. Feel His protection. Be one with it. You are that. You are one with God's Omniscience.

As we are in this calm consciousness, let me just read a few words from one of the Master's letters. I know you'll enjoy it. Apply it to yourself.

He says, "One has to practice deeper and deeper until calmness and joy become a second nature, like the habit of the body, which is built through incarnations." As you feel now this peace, that becomes your second nature, just like it's awful easy to feel the body with its trouble. Then he goes on to say, "Just make the joy of meditation ever with you, never think it is away and it will stay. As you cannot forget the body, so the time will come when you cannot forget the Joy of God and the soul. When devotees sincerely work, they sure get Divine Grace, but God never surrenders," he never surrenders, "until He is thoroughly and completely sure of the devotee. That's why it takes so long, because He is sitting behind all things." So realize, if you persevere, you will surely get God, as He is in us, even behind all our thoughts and actions and will.

Closing Prayer

Infinite Father, may Thy Grace be upon us, that we never feel separated from Thee from this moment on. Father, Thou art our Father, we are one with Thee. There is no separation between us. Father, we bow to Thee.

Now let us rise and sing with joy in our hearts, our closing song.

Glory Hallelujah played and sung.

Raise the hands. Infinite Father, Friend, Beloved God, may Thy Love shine forever, on the sanctuary of my devotion, and may I be able, by Thy Grace, to awaken Thy Love in all hearts. Make my soul Thy temple, make my heart Thy altar, make my love Thy home. Be Thou the only King, reigning on the throne of all my desires. I bow to Thee, O Father, to Thy channels, Jesus, Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, Sri Yukteswarji, and I offer my love on the altar of my heart to the Master who sacrificed so much for so many, and for me. I bow to Thee. Aum, Peace, Bliss, Amen. God bless you.

1 Whispers From Eternity by Paramahansa Yogananda

2 What Lightning Flash Glimmers in Thy Face, chant by Paramahansa Yogananda

3 Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramahansa Yogananda