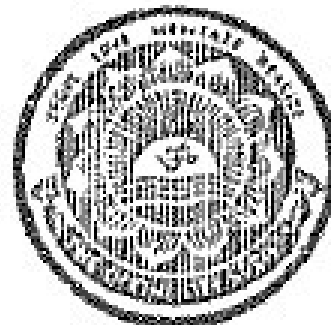


THE YOGA WAY
TO PEACE, HAPPINESS AND GOD
— THE ART OF RIGHT LIVING —

BEING A SUMMARY OF THE
LECTURES DELIVERED BY
SWAMI VENKATESANANDA

*At Perth (West Australia) from
6th to 23rd April 1961*

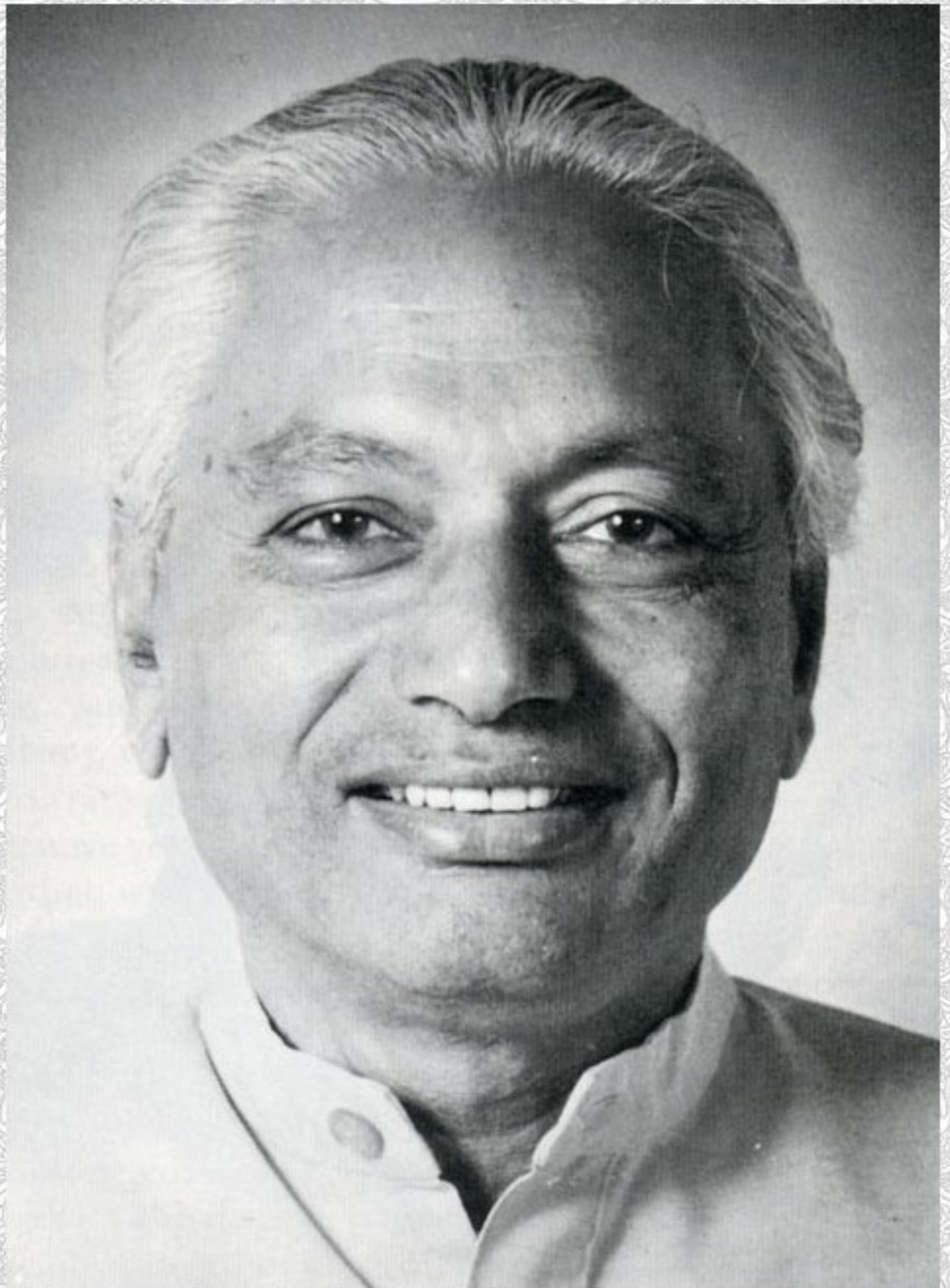


Published by

The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy
(THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY)

P.O. Sivanandanagar, (via) Rishikesh
Dt. Tehri Garhwal, U.P., Himalayas, India

1961



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Published by Swami Krishnananda for the The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy
(Divine Life Society) and printed at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy Press,
P.O, Sivananadagar, Rishikesh - Dt. Tehri Garhwal, U.P., Himalayas, India

First Edition: 1961

A GREAT EXPERIENCE

It was a great experience of my Master's divine omnipresence, to have actually seen his divine life and message inscribed on the tablets of hundreds of hearts in Perth, West Australia. From the moment I landed there on the 6th April till the very last moment when I sailed back to Ceylon, I basked in the warmth of my Master's omnipresence in Perth.

All glory to Gurudev and to his glorious instruments in Perth - Dr. and Mrs. Werther, who were extremely kind and hospitable hosts to me, Mr. and Mrs. Mc Cardells, Mr. Lionel Drummond and Mr. A. Kolpa. The members and leaders of sister-institutions and groups I met in Perth, the Rev. Bryant of the Trinity Church, Rev. Brindal of the Seekers, Mrs. Taylor, Mr. Walter Dawson of S.R.F. and members of the Rotary Club - were extremely gracious. The cosmic vision and broad-mindedness of Rev. Bryant in inviting' me to give a sermon from the pulpit of his church! The radiant face of Rev. Brindal greeting me every time we met each other! In all of them I saw my Master's living gospel in action.

The letters I have received already from some of the earnest seekers who gave me an opportunity to serve them, indicate that the Master's message has already begun to illumine their path. All glory to my divine Master, Sri Swami Sivananda. May we follow Him and attain the goal of life here and now.

Once again. I express my gratitude to the people of Perth for all the love and affection they showered on me.

Perth
23rd April 1961

Venkatesananda

FOREWORD

It is to the Lord and my Guru, Swami Sivananda that I give my eternal gratitude that they gave me the power and opportunity to arrange the memorial visit of our illustrious Swami Venkatesananda to Perth, the only city in Australia which He could visit. It was the rarest privilege for a city like Perth and for me, a humble servant to the Divine Life Society, to have witnessed a series of of God-inspired talks by Swami Venkatesananda, which have electrified audiences who perhaps partly have never heard before a word of yoga, Vedanta or similar messages. It is my deep conviction that a great number of people have been transformed by Swamiji's words and that the benefit of His presence will only be seen and measured in some future. In order that others can hear these words, Swami has kindly offered to I have His speeches printed for distribution to the public. I wish to express my sincere hope that this booklet may become a source of spiritual food for many people and help to bring peace and harmony to the world.

R.T. Werther
President D.L.S. Perth

PERTH SELF-REALISATION FELLOWSHIP

Dear Swami Sivananda,

The Perth Self-Realisation Fellowship Group send You joyful acknowledgement of your supreme gift to Western Australia in making it possible for Swami Venkatesananda to spend two Divine weeks in this City of Perth.

His Public tour has been a tremendous success, culminating at the University of Western Australia when the Physics Theatre was packed to the highest tier to hear his discourse on "Yoga and Christianity". He held and won the hearts of everyone present with his clear and lucid explanation of this difficult subject, also his very wonderful sense of humor which had the audience rocking with laughter. Every question was answered with meticulous care. The tour has placed Yoga on a much higher level in the eyes of the public and has done tremendous good for the World Brotherhood cause.

The S.R.F. Group was blessed by the presence of Swamiji at a meeting when he gave a discourse on Self~Realisation; a magnificent rendition on the purpose of the Soul. His instructions on meditation brought a deep sense of peace as our little Group sat in Divine silence with your very Blessed messenger of Love and Truth.

May God, Christ and His Guru guide His every word and deed amongst mankind at this critical time when the Spiritual word is needed most.

We express to you Dear Swami Sivananda, very deep appreciation of the mission and the goal, but we want you to know that we all have experienced very deeply, most of us for the first time, the sweetness of Divine Love which passed from your messenger to us.

We remain,
Very affectionately yours,
may God Bless all at your Academy,
Per Walter Dawson,
Leader.

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1 - ON HATHA YOGA

Summary of three lectures-cum-demonstrations, two at the Young Australia League and the third at the Town Hall, Fremantle.

The Yogi of India recognises that in his endeavour to perfect himself, he has to take note of three distinct aspects of his being. Yoga is a perfect and scientific system of self-culture - self-sculpture rather, and therefore it caters to the needs of all these three aspects.

At a wedding reception, the bride gets a number of presents from friends: they fall into three categories, viz., flowers, dresses and ornaments. What is most beautiful is the gift of flowers - lovely, fragrant and attractive colors. They attract attention most. The friends who bring them have to take great care to see that they are not crumpled or the arrangement disturbed. But, the bride knows that they will fade away soon: she wears them with great joy, but throws them away into the nearest bin when the reception comes to a close. The dresses are taken into the apartments and left in the wardrobe. They will last longer and are more useful. But the ornaments which perhaps attract much less attention than the flowers or the dresses, are carefully preserved in the steel cabinet; they are of permanent value.

Similarly we have the three aspects of our being. The body: the thing that immediately catches anyone's notice, the thing to which we attribute beauty, charm, magnetism, etc. Then we have the mind; and then the soul. The body has to be well preserved and looked after. It has to be kept in good health, free from ailments. But to devote all our time and attention to it would be like taking the flowers into the steel cabinet - the jewelry would have no place, then! Health is very important - either for living a happy life here, or for achieving success in our undertakings or for evolving spiritually and enjoying communion with God. Therefore Yoga has provided a system of physical culture, called the Yoga Asanas.

The Yoga Asanas are not body-building exercises, but they bestow upon the practitioner good health, inner resistance to diseases, strong nerves, and clear tranquil mind, by promoting the health of the internal viscera in the body and of the extremely vital endocrine glands which play a great role in our health and long life.

The Sirsasana, for instance, promotes an abundant blood circulation to the head, strengthening not only the vital organs like the eye, the ears, etc., but also the little pineal gland and the pituitary gland which are vital to our well-being. The shoulder-stand or Sarvangasana massages the thyroid gland - another vital organ. The Halasana, in addition, ensures the health of the

abdominal viscera. The Matsyasana, besides relieving the crampy feeling one may have after Sarvangasana, expands the chest cavity and promotes deep breathing. The 'spinal triad' - cobra pose, locust pose, and the bow pose, and the spinal twist - Ardha-Matsyendrasana, keep the spine mobile and prevent their stiffening, with consequent undue and unhealthy pressure on the nerves which branch off from the spinal cord. Paschimottanasana prevents abdominal ailments and the fashionable disease, diabetes. So does Padahasthasana. Mayurasana helps digestion and assimilation of food. And, the wonderful system of exercises called Suryanamaskara combines some of these postures, a little bit of quick physical movement, sun bathing, worship of God (sun), and thus achieves a marvelous combination,. Finally, Savasan enables you to relax, relax, relax, all tensions in the body. This relaxation should be consciously brought about by sending thought-currents to the various parts of the body "relax." The mind itself should be relaxed by offering it to God.

The few Pranayama exercises - simple deep breathing, breathing through alternate nostrils, and breathing through alternate nostrils with a little retention - that we need do daily enable us to breathe as we should and derive the maximum benefit from the fresh air we breathe in. Bhastrika generates instant vitality in the body: the goldsmith uses his bellows for augmenting the fire, and we use the bellow-movement of the abdomen to augment the fire of Prana within us.

These physical exercises and breathing exercises calm the nerves and ease all tension in the body and the mind. They purify the subtle astral "nerves" or Nadis, the subtle "wires" through which the Pranic current flows. They purify the mind also and prepare it for the higher Yoga practices.

Now, this is like the dresses presented to the bride at the wedding. They are of vital importance, but yet secondary to the diamond necklace. Even so, these physical exercises and the regulation of breath are vitally important to the practice of Yoga. But we should not stop with them. We should go deeper and obtain that precious diamond we have within ourselves. We should own and possess that precious Thing - Self - by knowing it, by realising it as direct experience. Concentration of the mind and meditation lead us to this direct experience of the Self. Our divine Master Sri Swami Sivananda therefore insists that we should, side by side with these Yoga Asanas and Pranayama, go on with the concentration and meditation exercises, so that we may reach the goal of our life here and now.

Master says that that goal is God-realisation. We shall not stop short of that goal. We shall enjoy good health and long life and shall utilise these for attaining that goal.

2 - THE YOGA WAY OF LIFE

Rotary Club Luncheon 7th April 1961

I am glad to be here. I have never before been so far away from home and yet so near it. Thanks to the love, hospitality and affection I have found everywhere and in everyone I have met here in this beautiful country.

Rotarian Green introducing the new member had provided the best preface to my talk. The few words that I have been privileged to address to you this afternoon are really meant for the thousands whom you represent here, and they are addressed to you only in your capacity as "ambassadors to the fraternity of your individual calling".

Mankind has always looked to the leaders for guidance. People have followed everyone who promised some benefits to them. Here comes the politician with his 'isms', assuring the people that if only the nation is governed the way they want to, every one will have peace, happiness and prosperity. The economist has his own theories and ideologies to secure the same benefits. The scientist has his latest inventions in his pocket: and they will undoubtedly bring peace, happiness and prosperity to all, if they are immediately adopted. The leaders of society have all their own panacea for human ills.

And yet, how is it that the goal seems to recede farther, in spite of so many well-meaning benefactors of mankind endeavouring to take mankind there? It is because the heart of man has been left untouched. Yoga calls for a transformation in this vital sphere from which all inspiration springs, and in which all great ideas are sown. Unless the heart is made clean and pure, the inspiration may be distorted and the growth may be perverted, too, even as an attempt to paint a beautiful face on an ugly canvas.

Normally we cannot reach the depths of our own heart, because of a solid, impenetrable wall of prejudices and inhibitions. Unless the waves subside on the surface of the lake, we cannot see beneath that surface. Hence Yoga prescribes meditation. In Meditation, man communes with himself, his own Self, the God who dwells in his heart. He is alone: but he is never alone, but alone with God. In that moment of inner communion, he feels that he is at one with the entire world, the entire universe, that he is linked with all by the One Life that dwells in all, the one God who dwells in all, the One Common Consciousness that pervades everybody, everything.

This is not all, either. This communion generates goodwill and fellow-feeling in our heart. But these have to find expression in our day to day life in our relationship with all. In our daily life we should express through our thoughts, words and deeds, the fellowship that is the motto of this great institution. You

have it here already; it must penetrate into all the other institutions that guide the destinies of man kind, and into the hearts of all, working a transformation of the heart of man. The wall of prejudices and inhibitions must be broken down. We must perceive us as we are - and realise we are one with the entire creation. And, in the Fatherhood of the One God, we must cultivate the brotherhood of all beings.

This is the Yoga way of life. It will ensure that the world will have peace and mankind happiness and progress. It will then enable mankind to derive the maximum benefit from the blessings conferred upon it by the politician, the economist, the scientist and the social leaders.

I thank you for your invitation and for your kindness and for this opportunity given to me to convey the message of my divine Master Sri Swami Sivananda, whose divine thoughts I have endeavoured to convey to you, as a postman delivers a letter.

3 - SIVANANDA'S TEACHINGS IN A NUTSHELL

Broadcast at 9.40 on 8.4.1961 over 61 X

This is the first time I have been so far away from the home of my birth; but I have never been so close to my home either. The love and affection that my beloved sisters and brothers in Australia have showered upon me leave me speechless with gratitude.

From the holy land of India, from what is perhaps one of the prayer-rooms in this wonderful mansion of God which we call the world, I bring to the people of Australia the greetings and blessings of my master Sri Swami Sivananda and His unique Gospel of Divine Life.

In brief, divine life is divinising our entire life. We shed the animal in us and become human beings first, by cultivating goodness and goodwill in our heart. Then we sublimate these divine qualities and let our heart expand to cosmic dimensions, breaking down all the barriers that separate man from man, and man from the other orders of creation.

My Master prescribes an all-round practice of Yoga for the integral development of the entire personality of man - the physical, mental, moral, intellectual, psychic and spiritual aspects of his personality. The technique is to combine the several Yoga practices like the Yoga physical postures, Yoga way of breathing, concentration, meditation and prayer, with a righteous life devoted to the welfare of all beings. By a process of communion with God in the early hours of the morning, we are asked to charge ourselves with divinity, and to let this current flow through us throughout the day in the form of love and goodwill to all beings. This is my Master's Gospel of Divine Life. This transforms man into a divinity. I shall endeavour to spread this gospel at the various meetings that have been convened during the period I have been privileged to stay in this holy country. May God bless you.

4 - DIVINE LIFE

lecture at a reception by members the D.L.S. - 9th April 1961

You are already quite familiar with my Master's teachings? and I can already see the impact of it on your lives, in the most loving and affectionate way that I have been received in this country by the Master's followers.

Australia is rich. Australia is young. Australia is growing. Australia is open to two influences - the materialistic and the spiritual. And, it has been the Supreme Grace of the Lord that has enabled young Australia to open itself to the spiritual influence of the East. It is my fervent hope and belief that perhaps in God's Plan, Australia may be chosen to be the meeting place for the two great cultures the Eastern and the Western, representing the spirit and the body.

Dr. Werther referred to India as a nation far advanced spiritually, capable of giving a spiritual lead to all others. Yes: and, if we look upon the whole world as one unit - the Home of God - then we should regard India as one of the prayer rooms in that house. Just as the owner of the house and the members of the family have access to every part of it and feel at home everywhere, I feel that all of you too should take your full share in the Indian heritage of wisdom, feel that what India has achieved is your own achievement. The spiritual teachings of my divine Master are as much yours as they are mine. That is why, by the Master's Grace, I am here with you all, to share His message.

This is an intimate gathering, and not a public meeting. Hence, I should like to take the opportunity of explaining a few vital factors concerning Divine Life which we, who have dedicated our lives to its propagation, should always bear in mind.

First and foremost: it is not a new religion. It is a way of life, which may be and should be adopted, whatever one's religious faith may be. It is a Commonwealth of all Religious Beliefs, with no frontiers, capable of absorbing all the faiths that exist in the world today, and which may spring up in the future, too! Divine Life is based on Truth which pervades all creation; it recognises that there is one Common Consciousness which indwells all beings in the universe, which is at the same time capable of being viewed from infinite angles. This is the most important cornerstone of our divine Master's philosophy. It broadens our outlook, and it ultimately enables us to love all and serve all.

The second vital factor which we, as followers of our divine Master ought to bear always in mind is that Divine Life is not a theory or dogma, but life life is

divinising life. It is living divinely, not just talking it over a cup of tea. In "Divine Life", our Master has synthesised and represented the ancient truths which have been propounded by sages and saints, the prophets and founders of all the great religions of the world. God has from time to time sent us great teachers and saviours to awaken to the purpose of life, viz., God-realisation. The spirit is awakened by them. For the purpose of the understanding of the masses, it is often clothed in form. Soon, the people forget the spirit and cling to the form. Once again, the Lord sends His messengers to carry out a spring-cleaning. He is Infinite Patience. So is our Master. Patiently he lets us all evolve. He will send His messengers again and again, till we realise that we should practise Divine Life. There is not much use learning all about

Yoga and Divine Life. The need is to put what we know into practice.

Not that we can become saints and Yogis overnight. But we should try. We should sincerely try. Not like the widows in India who preyed for liberation! A few widows used to go to a shrine to pray before the Image of the Lord there: "O Lord, we have nobody in the world to take care of us. Take us to your Feet." The priest was moved by the prayer and he appealed to the Lord to bless them. But the Lord appeared in the priest's dream and told him that they were insincere and gave him some instructions to test their sincerity. Next day, as they were approaching the inner shrine, the priest quickly hid himself behind the image, and after they had offered their prayer, shouted: "O devotee's, I am pleased with your devotion. I shall grant you liberation just now." They took to their heels and ran away; saying, "Oh I cannot go now; my grandson is in England", or some such excuse. This is not sincerity. We should sincerely try to practise. It is our example that will inspire others to follow our Master's teachings.

The third factor that I would request you to bear in mind always is that Divine Life or Yoga does not ask man to change his religion or to run away from home. God is not hidden in some remote cave or forest. He is within our heart. There should be intense love for Him in our heart. Then He will reveal Himself to us. We should do everything for His sake, as worship of the Omnipresent Godhead. Our angle of vision should change. There should be an inner transformation of our heart. We should not get attached to the world, but take an intense interest in performing our duties. Misery results from attachment. On account of desire, we get attached to the objects of the world and then weep and wail, like the man who swam to salvage a bundle of blankets.

Two friends were walking along the bank of a river when they saw a bundle of black blankets floating downstream. One wanted to go and get it. The other felt it was not worthwhile. But the former heedlessly jumped into the river, swam towards the bundle and caught hold of it. But he could not bring it

ashore - he himself was floating downstream with it. The friend on the bank shouted: "Leave it and come back." But the friend in the water replied: "I let it go, but it will not." It was a black bear! That is what happens to us when we get attached to the objects of enjoyment: later when we want to give them up, it is hard. We should develop the spirit of detachment. That is important. That is the fourth vital teaching of our Master. "Detach, attach. Detach the mind from the objects of the world, and attach it to the Lord." We are not asked to run away from the world.

This Yoga is for all.

And, while I am here I shall give you the outline of this Yoga, in brief.

5 - WHAT IS YOGA?

Adult Education Board, Lunch Hour - 10th April 1961

Yoga is not a religion. In fact even Hinduism is not a religion. India got its name from the river Indus that flows in the north-west part of that country. Those who lived in that part were called the Hindus. What has come to be known as Hinduism is really a commonwealth of religions. It has a place for every type of faith, from rank materialism and denial of God, to the highest realisation of the One Common Consciousness in which nothing else exists!

People are unnecessarily alarmed when the word Yoga is mentioned, when someone practises Yoga Asanas and Pranayama or meditates. Yoga is the art of right living. Yoga enables you to take a greater interest in life, because Yoga is life itself. The Yogi who has learned this art of right living is therefore happy, harmonious and peaceful; he is free from tensions; he is always optimistic.

Yoga is for all.

16th April 1961

There is a remarkable and universal daily experience which has gone unnoticed. It is sleep. In sleep, when we are not enjoying any object of sense pleasure, we are really happy and peaceful. When we do not take any tonics, we get refreshed. How? We had forgotten the body and the world.

Here is the clue: if we can forget ourselves, we can be happy. If we can forget this world, we can be peaceful. In order that we might reflect upon this wonderful phenomenon, we are asked by our masters to meditate early in the morning, as soon as we wake up and just before going to bed. But we do not, and miss the great lesson we can learn from this wonderful experience.

But, what about the rest of the day? We can not go on sleeping for ever! Here, our divine Master Swami Sivananda comes to our help with a unique recipe. It is self-forgetful self-less service. Never pausing to think about our own happiness or welfare, we should go on serving all and promoting the welfare of all. In such selfless service, we should forget ourselves and the world around us. And, we are automatically happy.

We shall be healthy, too;: for when we forget the body, we entrust it to Nature. What aggravates our diseases and our miseries is thinking of them, and worsening them with wrong thought-currents and fears. If we are constantly engaged in selfless service, we shall not commit this blunder and Nature will heal our body very quickly.

6 - SEEK, FIND, ENTER, REST.

Seekers' Luncheon 12th and 13th April 1961

I am glad to be among the Seekers, with Mr. Brindal, young, radiant and wise, guiding all. What a glorious privilege it is to be a seeker after Truth! All are seekers, everyone in the world seeks after something or other. It is even true that everyone in the world seeks after one thing - happiness. But, this subtle inner urge is often distorted in its manifestation into very different impulses ; and man, unconscious of the bases of this inner urge busies himself, seeking after the goods of this Earth.

But the Lord comes again into our midst with His divine message: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God." And, that "Kingdom of God is within you." Unable to turn the gaze within ourselves, we ignorantly search for happiness in the external objects of this world, to be disillusioned again and again, to be thwarted in our aim again and again.

While we 'study the life of the Lord Jesus and try to adore Him, we often forget the message of his crucifixion. Unless we crucify the little I, the egoistic self, which constantly clamours for sense-enjoyment, for vain undertakings here, in order to satisfy the hunger for self-aggrandisement, we cannot resurrect the highest wisdom within us, we cannot be born in the Christ. When we crucify the little I, the little self, when we feel "Lord, I am not", immediately He reveals Himself from within. We find God within.

We must dare to walk this path which leads us to our own crucifixion. We must dare to find Him, the fountain of bliss. Then we can enter into Him. And there, in Him, with Him, we shall find rest. We shall attain Christ Consciousness which is our goal. Hence, my divine Master sums up the life divine in four words: Seek, Find, Enter, Rest.

But we must dare to oppose the satanic influences that assail us. We must say to them: "Get thee behind me, Satan." The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. But if we take a joyous interest in a spirit of holy adventure, in this pursuit of Truth, we shall find His Grace illumining our path. We shall seek, find, enter and rest in Him.

7 - YOGA IN THE MODERN WORLD

TV Interview "Focus" - 12th April 1961

Mr. Alexander: Good evening, Swami. Is Yoga a religion?

Answer: No, Mr. Alexander. Yoga is a way of life. It enables us to get the correct perspective to life, and get the correct sense of values. Yoga is the art of right living. Hence, the Yogi is able to live happily in all circumstances, devoting himself to the quest of the Reality.

Mr. Alexander : Is meditation an important part of this Yoga?

Answer: Yes, it is Yoga, in fact, for it enables us to develop this perspective.

Mr. Alexander: What about the Yoga exercises then?

Answer: If by that you mean the Yoga physical exercises, they are necessary preliminaries to this real Yoga or meditation. In meditation we want to forget the body. Unless the body is in good health, and harmonised, it will be difficult to forget the body. The Yoga physical exercises enable us to enjoy good health and also this harmony, so vital to the practice of meditation. But we should not forget that, however essential they are, they represent but a step to the higher attainments in Yoga.

Mr Alexander: How do you relate Yoga to life in modern world?

Answer: The practice of Yoga is the vital need of everyone in the modern world. It is the key to unlock the chambers of inner power, joy and wisdom. Through the regular practice of concentration and meditation, we can become wiser and more efficient in our daily life. In fact, my divine master Sri Swami Sivananda is emphatic that even now the greatest scientist who has discovered the hidden secrets of nature, the artist, the poet, the thinkers, in fact all men of achievement, do unconsciously practise Yoga. They get their inspiration and intuitive knowledge from meditation.

Mr. Alexander: It is reported that you gave up worldly goods. What for?

Answer: Not worldly goods, but worldly goals. Worldly desires stunt our inner growth, When we renounce worldly goals, worldly desires and ambitions, we can attain to greater mental inwardness, greater concentration of mind and deeper meditation, which in their turn will lead us to the discovery of Godhead within us, the greatest achievement and the purpose of human birth.

Mr Alexander: Thank you, Swami. Answer: Thank you, Mr. Alexander.

8 - THE HEART OF CULTURE

Friends of the Hebrew University - 15th April 1961

It is a great pleasure to be amongst you all, for we represent two of the most ancient religions still surviving in the world today. It is a greater pleasure to be amongst those who really seek after Truth. We are in a minority today. Overwhelming are the forces of irreligion and atheism.

Yet, when I reflect over this position, I remind myself that in this big body of ours the heart occupies a very small place; and yet who will say that it is the least part of the body. Even though the really spiritual people are in a minority today, they represent the heart of mankind, And, the encircling gloom only reminds us that the darkest hour is before dawn.

We ought to prepare ourselves to herald that dawn. In order to do that, we must bestir ourselves and do the Word of God. We should not be content with knowledge of the scriptures, but we should endeavour to practise their commandments.

Prophets come again and again. God sends His own Messengers again and again into our midst. They awaken the spirit in us. The spirit is some times clothed in a form to suit the intelligence of the masses. Soon, the spirit is forgotten and matter assumes prime importance. Again, the Lord sends another messenger. Thus we have in our midst one of the greatest of the Lord's messengers, our divine Master who once again sounds the clarion call of practise.

Let us practise religion and become perfect.

Question: Children are perhaps religious. Old men are also religious-minded. But how can the people between these two age-groups be made to lead a righteous life?

Answer: This can only be done by proper upbringing of the children. They get very bad examples at home, in their indisciplined and irreligious parents. They do not get proper education at the schools and colleges. I can only commend to your consideration, the ancient Hindu system of education. Life itself was divided into four stages - the student-life, the household-life, the life of retirement and the life of renunciation. The student was entrusted to a good teacher to live with. A handful of students per teacher ensured individual attention. Discipline and control of senses were insisted upon. Along with arts and sciences, philosophy and the highest ideals of life were infused into the student. At the proper time, he went home and married. When he took leave of the teacher, the student was once again reminded of

his high ideals. He marries to perpetuate the family-line, and as he feels that his two shoulders are not enough to carry the responsibility of supporting the entire society - which was his duty, he took on two more shoulders - a wife. His controlled mind and disciplined senses do not crave for enjoyment. Moreover he knows that soon he should retire, go to a forest to do penance and meditation, and ultimately to renounce the world and roam about. Righteousness becomes part of his life.

Question: Why is a righteous life insisted upon if liberation is the goal? Is it not possible to arrive at the Highest by other means - through intellectual analysis, etc.?

Answer: This might lead to perversion. We firmly believe that a moral life is prerequisite for spiritual illumination. Truth will be revealed only in a pure heart, just as only a clean mirror will reflect our face. This has been beautifully illustrated in the story of Indra-Virochana which occurs in our Upanishads. Moreover, as concentration of mind and meditation are indispensable to intuition which is the door to Truth, immoral and unethical conduct has been found to distract the mind in a thousand ways making concentration impossible.

9 - PRACTICE OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD

The Trinity Church of Perth - 16th April 1961

Our Father in Heaven, Who is present here with us this holy evening, the reverend father Bryant, and children of the Lord, my sisters and brothers in Christ.

It was indeed thoughtful of Father Bryant to put us all through the threefold prayer during the service - the prayer of thanksgiving, the prayer of confession, and the prayer for others. While I bowed my head and offered my prayer of thanksgiving, I thanked God for this great opportunity given to me to be here in your holy company. I believe this is the first occasion in the history of the religions we represent here that a Hindu monk has preached from a Christian pulpit. It is a great event in the Lord's Divine Plan, and I thanked Him for that. When the turn for confession came - and it is perhaps the supreme moment in my life when I could confess the greatest sin I am guilty of, and gain God's forgiveness, I had no hesitation to make my choice. Lord, how long have I denied you, how long have I been away from you, how long have I, professing to believe in the One God of the Universe, yet allowed my narrow vision and undivine actions belie my faith, leading to bigotry. Lord, forgive me, let the vision of Unity be restored to my inner eye and let me never shut myself away from Your Presence. And, that was my prayer for others, too. For if this is the dawn of a New Era of religious unity and understanding, then everyone in the world should join hands and usher in that era.

There is no doubt about that. We cannot afford I to talk of differences. I read to you a few verses from our Scripture, the Gita. I listened to the hymns that you recited. I could find no difference. In fact, what is the difference, I ask, between Christ and Krishna - the two names even sound alike. The people who talk of differences are hypocrites, not religious men. If God Himself came down to the Earth and proclaimed the unity of religions, then these people would go away from the religious fold and seek differences elsewhere. It is the devil in them that seeks an expression, and it finds differences where none exist. If the doors of religion were closed, it would seek expression in other fields of human activity.

We often hear that religion has been the cause of riots, war and bloodshed. History is cited in favour of this argument. I ask: was the second World War fought for religion or in the name of God, was the Atomic Bomb dropped over Japan in the name of God, are the thousands of murders that take place all over the world every day committed for the sake of religion or in the name of God? No. It is the brute in man that seeks expression: and it will find some excuse somehow or other. The people, who talk about differences are

irreligious, the devil's disciples. Let the godly people unite and strengthen the forces of religion.

I study the Holy Bible. I study the Bhagavad Gita. I cannot find a single contradictory thought. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all these things will be added unto you," says the Lord. This thought is echoed in the Bhagavad Gita: "Whoever constantly thinks of Me, I attend to his needs." Where is the Kingdom of God, that we may seek after that? "The Kingdom of God is within you," says the Lord. Again in the Gita: "God is seated in the hearts of all beings." "Lo, I am with you always," says the Lord in the Holy Bible. Where is the difference?

We should enter into the spirit of these great teachings. We must first seek the Kingdom of God within. But we have no time nor the inclination. We collect empty shells and throw away the pearl. We do not have the wisdom of the woman who picked up the king as her choice. Once a wise king had a bright idea. He wanted to know which among his subjects was truly wise. He had it announced that on a certain day the doors of the palace would be thrown open and that anyone could enter and take anything which was in it. People came in their hundreds and took away the valuable jewels, carpets and other articles of worth. One woman walked right through the corridors, without taking a second look at the glittering jewelry there, walked right up to the king and said: "My choice is your Majesty. I want you." With him, she had everything that was in the kingdom. Therefore, seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all these things will be added unto you.

That Kingdom of God is within you. As my master Swami Sivananda points out again and again, God is nearer to us than the breath that flows in our nostrils. We should learn the art of finding Him within ourselves by prayer and meditation. But we want only the objects of sense-pleasure. Even when we pray we ask only for them. And, God Who is all-love and supreme compassion, grants our prayers. We get what we ask for, but soon discover that the choice was wrong. The objects only increased our worry and misery. Miseries come to awaken us. A great Indian saint has said: "If only you had the sense to worship God when you were prosperous, you need not have to suffer this adversity."

Adversity is a way God calling us to turn to Him. When I am walking along the road and you are behind me, you call out to me. But if I do not hear and respond, you tap my shoulders with your walking stick or umbrella. God has been calling out to us again and again; all ye that labour under a heavy burden, come to Me. But we do not listen. Therefore, He gently taps on our shoulders with the stick of adversity. We have to turn now.

We turn to prayer. We come to the holy church and pray. Is it not significant that we close our eyes and pray? Does not this act prove that we intuitively know that God is within? Do we not close our eyes when we take a beloved child into our hands and hug him close to ourselves? Does this not prove that the greatest happiness is within - in God? Seek ye first the Kingdom of God! The Kingdom of God is within.

When we pray, we commune with Him who is perfect. When we pray, the sin-hardened heart melts. We feel the Presence of God within. Our prides and prejudices evaporate. The ego is shaken. We are in the Presence of God. We open our eyes. The Presence persists. We begin to see that the Kingdom of God is not only within us, but within all - not only all human beings, but in the hearts of all beings, in every atom of existence. That is a great experience.

But we cannot stand on our own shoulders. There is no revolution in nature - there is only evolution. All on a sudden we cannot enter into that limitless experience and feel His Presence in all, every where. In the Gita we are given a gradual graded exercise which enables us to grow in this Practice. You have it in the lives of the saints of Christendom. First, we endeavour to remember God and feel His Presence when we see a Holy Man, the Holy Cross, or the Church. The Pictures of our Lord Jesus or the saints remind us of Him. The sun reminds us that it is He that makes him give us light, the moon reminds us that He has appointed the moon to illumine the world at night - these ideas you find in your hymns. The limitless sky reminds you that His Grace and His Light will endure when the earth has been taken away. You just sang these thoughts in the hymns. You look around and see Christians, and you remember that they are following the Path paved by His Commandments. You see children, remember that Lord Jesus was fond of them - and feel His Presence with them. Gradually the vision expands, the arms of prayer which you extend embrace more and more sections of the beings around you, and your love flows towards all. You feel His Presence in all. The film of evil which perverted your vision vanishes and we see no evil. His Living Presence animates all, and all are evolving towards the Realisation of His Living Presence.

This works the greatest miracles within us - the miracle of ego-crushing. The ego is gradually thinned out and finally it is annihilated. I is lost. But that is no loss - it is the loss of limitation. And we sing in joy, "Lord, I am not. Thou art." The river has joined the ocean. The identity is lost - no longer the Nile, the Thames and the Ganges - but Limitlessness, Infinity and Eternity have been gained.

May the Almighty Whose Divine Presence we feel this evening guide us towards this Sublime Goal! May we constantly live in His Presence, by His own supreme Compassion, and His Light which shines through holy men like

our rev. Father Bryant and our master Swami Sivananda, and illumines our path! May we, feeling His Presence in us and all around us, never walk into temptation, but fill ourselves with righteousness, so that we might become Perfect, even as the Father in Heaven is Perfect. Om.

I thank the Lord seated in your hearts for having blessed me with this opportunity to serve you. May God bless you all.

10 - AWAKE! STRIVE! REALIZE!

Self Realisation Fellowship - 17th April 1961-

We have just now heard Paramahansa Yogananda's voice awakening us. To awaken His slumbering children, God sends down into the earth His own Sparks in the form of our Guru from time to time. To this class belong Paramahansa Yogananda and our own divine Master Sri Swami Sivananda.

How long does it take to wake up? Practically no time at all. Even so, we are assured that it does not take any time at all to realise the Self. But we should want to be awakened. Else, how long does it take to awaken one who does not want to wake up, who will not wake up? He may never wake up at all! That is our position. If we sincerely want to wake up, the Guru will do it in no time.

And, having woken up, we should dare! We should all have that spirit of adventure which our divine Masters had. Then we can also shine as spiritual luminaries as they shine.

We should take a genuine interest in Self-realisation. It is the inevitable goal of all of us. Let us march forward. We should sit in silence and study ourselves, realise every part of ourselves, every aspect of our being. It will be extremely interesting to study the mind. Let us not be ashamed or afraid of introspection - we will find many astounding truths about ourselves. We should learn to be alone, alone with God for some hours of the day, search our inmost chambers for lurking evil traits - and try to eradicate them. Patience is required, sincerity is required. Whenever I utter the word sincere, I somehow split it into two and pronounce it sin-seer. Perhaps that is what is meant. We should recognise our sins as mistakes committed by the baby soul in evolution, and deal with them with a cheerful heart and a spirit of adventure. Above all, we should regularly pray, meditate and commune with God in silence. We may falter - it does not matter. God, our Mother, is behind us always ready to lift us up immediately we falter. We must reach the goal. We must realise God now.

Cultivate the missionary spirit and dedicate yourselves to this work. The reward is very great: Self-realisation,

11 - THE ANCIENT AND LIVING FAITH OF YOGA

Adult Education Board - 18th April 1961

Vedanta as the philosophical foundation for the practice of Yoga is ageless. The sages and seers to whom the Truth was revealed went to the root of the problem of knowledge; and they arrived at the premise that knowledge involved at the commencement of its quest, the subject and the object. It is remarkable how they set about analysing the external universe, without apparently having the advantages of modern laboratory equipment. We often claim that we are today more advanced than they were; but, if we assume that they had some sort of a scientific laboratory for the research they conducted, they would be on a par with us, whereas if we assented that they had no such assistance, then they rise to phenomenal stature - how could they reach those wonderful conclusions, unaided!

Realising that probing into the macrocosm would be an endless task, they turned their mind to the microcosm - the inner world of man; and, long before we found that the atom contained the energy that pervaded the universe, they said it. And, so, they busied themselves with discovering themselves!

Even here they made remarkable discoveries about our constitution. Everyone of them is corroborated by science today. They knew all knowledge was within, that we are all geniuses, potentially. I have often wondered how a child when it is told, 'That is a crow' - without being told how to produce that sound, immediately responds "crow". It is because the knowledge is already within the child - veiled, and all that we do is to unveil that knowledge. That is the Indian sage's concept of the spiritual preceptor or teacher. "Gu" means darkness, and "ru" is one who removes it. Because he removes the veil of darkness, the spiritual preceptor or teacher is called "Guru". Similarly, they asserted that all power was latent in us! The scientist, the psychologist, today agrees with this. How do we know it is true? Take the case of a man who is "dead tired". He feels there is not an ounce of energy left in him and that he could not even lift his hand. Supposing that he noticed a cobra near his bed. He himself will be surprised when he finds that he had got up from bed and run a mile, before stopping to look back! How did he do it? When we are about to fall asleep - in the state of 'twilight of consciousness' we suddenly remember something important - we experience something of an electric shock, get up and do the work, and sleep has vanished. How did we do that? There is a tremendous fund of energy within - it is from the God hidden in us, the fountain source of energy hidden within us.

My Master Sri Swami Sivananda characterises even the scientist, the poet, the great thinker etc, as a kind of Yogi, who has his moments of inspiration -

though they are accidental. The intense interest he has in solving the problem before him makes available that fountain of knowledge and power within him and he is able to make it.

The Yogi does this consciously and out of his own volition. Therefore he is in a state of perpetual inspiration. He can tap that limitless source of power and knowledge. He has awakened what in Yogic parlance is known as the Kundalini Shakti,

Now this again is something very interesting, The ancient Yogi discovered - without performing an operation on the body - that there are subtle centers of energy in the body, known as the Chakras. There are six of them. From each one of them radiate a number of Nadis - not exactly nerves, but extremely subtle channels for the life-force to flow. Each of these six centers had a certain number of radii known as "petals". They had all their counterparts in the brain which was as it were a 'thousand petalled lotus'. In a person in whom this Kundalini Shakti has not been awakened, these Chakras or plexuses on the spinal cord, are unopened, as it were, or unactivated. The brain centers corresponding to these Chakras, too, are unused!

That is what our scientists say today. During experiments conducted in brain surgery, it was discovered that we hardly use ten percent of our brain, and the rest remains unused. If we know how to use them, we can all become geniuses and supermen. The Rosicrucians are emphatic that the pineal gland in the brain is the "third eye" which has fallen into disuse. If we can regain its powers, we could see our past and future as distinctly as we see the present. By awakening the Kundalini Shakti, the Yogi vitalises the Chakras and their corresponding brain centers. This resulted in his enjoying great powers over the elements and the hidden faculties in the mind. During the same experiments in brain surgery the surgeons discovered that when a live filament was brought near certain brain centers, the patient was able to see visions of angels, remember past events which he does not normally, and so on.

The Yogi does not need external electric energy. He has the use of his own vital force - the Prana Shakti, to do this work for him. He knows that it obeys the will of the concentrated mind. Concentration is necessary in order to direct this vital force, to activate those centers of power and energy. We have an idea of it, when we reflect over what happens when we raise a hand for instance. The mind wills that the hand be raised, and the energy is immediately supplied to the muscles to lift that limb. By a similar process, the Yogi sends the vital force to the various Chakras in order to activate them.

In order to do that, therefore, we have first to learn to still the mind. This is a rather difficult task. But if we are earnest about it, it is not impossible. The

Yogi who turned his attention to this problem at once discovered the reason for this difficulty. He found that the mind is always tossed between the two currents of Raga and Dwesha - likes and dislikes - attraction and aversion. We like something and the mind runs to that something, taking us away with it - concentration on the inner self is impossible. We dislike something and the mind raises a huge wave of revolt at the very thought; its surface is disturbed and we cannot still it. Therefore, the Yogi asked us to get over our likes and dislikes. The mind must be purified and it must be quietened, before we can enjoy concentration and meditation.

With a concentrated mind, if we practised the necessary exercises, we could awaken the latent power in ourselves. The power lies at the Muladhara or the base of the spine. But, my Master always insists that even if we wanted to directly awaken this power, we should, instead of concentrating at that spot, practise concentration and meditation upon the Lord seated in the heart - a safe method. For, if the lower Chakras are activated before we get rid of all the lurking evils within us, we may be led away from the path of virtue, and thus the whole purpose of Yoga may be vitiated. Just as we can attract our friend's attention, either by walking up to him and tapping him on his shoulders or by calling out to him from a distance, we can awaken this Kundalini Shakti either by activating the Muladhara Chakra by the Hatha Yoga process, or by bringing it up to the Heart Chakra - Anahata Chakra, by the practice of concentration and meditation, or devotion to God, etc. The latter is the safer method advocated by my Master. Our aim should always be to use this great power within us, for spiritual ends, and not to create a Frankenstein's monster to eat us up. Let me remember the mistake committed unwittingly by the scientist who discovered that the atom split could produce tremendous energy - the impure heart of man uses any power only for destructive purposes.

Hence, my Master insists that along with the other practices of Yoga - e.g., Asanas, Pranayama, concentration and meditation - we should go on cultivating divine virtues, and we should try to be good and to do good. Then this divine energy when it is awakened, will enable us to realise our Self and liberate ourselves from this wheel of transmigration once for all.

12 - THE MISSION OF MY MASTER

Radio Interview - Women's Hour Interviewer: Mrs. King - Recorded on the 13th and broadcast on 19th April

Mrs. King: To begin with, please tell me what the term Swami means.

Answer: Monks in India are called Swamis. It signifies the Sanyasin or the man of renunciation. It actually means a Master or one who has control over his senses and mind.

Mrs. King: I find that your Master is called Swami Bivananda and this "ananda" is at the end of your name, too. Has that any special significance too?

Answer: Yes, very much so. The word means, in Sanskrit, joy or bliss. It therefore denotes that the person is one who delights in God, who has ceased to seek after and delight in objects of pleasure.

Mrs. King: When you say that, do you mean that you are not interested in the objects of this world?

Answer: You are right, Mother. We have to renounce desire for the pleasures of this world, before we are admitted into the Holy Order. The one desire for God consumes all other desires for earthly objects.

Mrs. King: How do you know that you have arrived at that state? Is there a period of probation or some such arrangement?

Answer: Yes, we do undergo a period of probation, a period of preparation. But what is more important, our Master Who is Himself a man of great spiritual insight, is able to choose the right ones for initiation.

Mrs. King: How does He choose His disciples? Does He ask them to join Him, or how else? How did You join Him?

Answer: Sometimes, He does ask people to join Him, as in my case. I had met Him before I joined him and the spiritual emanation is so compelling that you cannot resist the desire to join Him, dedicate your life to Him and serve Him.

Mrs. King: What made Him renounce the world?

Answer: It is a question difficult for me to answer, because it relates to Him. But in brief we might say, it is the Call of the Eternal Spirit.

Mrs. King: After entering the Order, you do not use any of the modern objects of the world?

Answer: We do. And, may I invite you, Mother, to pay a visit to our Holy Hermitage in North India, to bear witness to what I am going to say? We have there a blending of the ancient and the modern. We have an office where we have a battery of typewriters ever busy. We have a well-equipped photographic studio, hospital, and a printing press with the latest machinery. We have good use for all of them. We have tape-recorders and the latest in cameras. Our Master believes that these things in themselves are neither good nor bad; it is only the spirit in which or the motive with which they are used that counts. For instance, this broadcasting apparatus here in front of us is just now serving a very good purpose of conveying a spiritual message - and, it could be put to a very undesirable use too!

Mrs. King: Does your Master have many followers?

Answer: Yes, in the Ashram itself there are over 150 of us besides visitors. There are lay disciples and followers all over the world. His message has spread to all the nations of the world.

Mrs. King: Do they all practise Yoga?

Answer: Yes. The 150 of us at the monastery and an equal number of monk-disciples who are touring about have dedicated our lives to the service of our Master and follow His teachings. The other, lay followers, endeavour to walk the path of Yoga to the best of their ability. That is, Yoga as the acquisition of the correct outlook on life.

Mrs. King: It is very interesting, Swami; and I can go on talking to you about these things which might bring about a big exodus of people wanting to visit your monastery!

Answer: Welcome, mother; and that would be a very good thing. We can take a shipload of them on pilgrimage. Thank you.

13 - YOGA IN OUR LIFE

T.V. Interview 19th April 1961

Miss Romola Mc Swain: What is the meaning of the title "Swami"?

Answer: It means one who is a master of himself.

Miss Romola Mc Swain: I find that you have been going round and giving talks and demonstrations at various places in Perth on Yoga exercises? Now what does Yoga mean?

Answer: I take it that you refer to Yoga physical exercises. They have an important part to play in the practice of Yoga. They promote health, promote inner resistance to ailments, and generate a sense of well-being in us. The body must be healthy in order that we may forget it during meditation - meditation leads to Yoga which literally means 'union of our soul with God'.

Miss Romola Mc Swain: What part can Yoga play in our life here?

Answer: A lot. It can make us more efficient, more healthy, and resistant to ailments. And, it can greatly ease the nervous tension that I see around me here.

Miss Romola Mc Swain: What is the significance of the saffron robes you wear?

Answer: It is the color of fire. It signifies that we have offered up all our desires and cravings, our ignorance and attachment into the fire - the fire of discrimination, wisdom and renunciation.

Miss Romola Mc Swain: I am attracted by this beautiful instrument you have here. Will you tell us something about it, its age and so on?

Answer: It is the Veena. It has come down to us from pre-historic times. In fact, we believe that the Goddess of Music, Saraswati, Herself was the first one to play on it. It is regarded as something extremely sacred in India.

Miss Romola Mc Swain: Do many people play it there, and is it used only on religious occasions or in concerts, too?

Answer: Nowadays it is used on religious occasions as well as just a musical instrument for concerts. It is a difficult art to learn, and therefore till recently only a few people took to it. But now more and more people are coming forward to learn Veena music.

Miss Romola Mc Swain: Will you then please play on the instrument and also sing?

Answer: With pleasure. And this particular piece is a hymn in adoration of the Goddess of Music. Sarasvathi, Herself.

Assembly Hall Lectures 10th April 1961

14 - DIVINE LIFE

We shall begin at the beginning. Philosophers all over the world have endeavoured to probe into the nature of the universe and also to answer "The Big "Why" of creation itself. Why this creation? Why are we here? How did this come about? How did it all start?

Reason can take us to the threshold of wisdom; and then it is faith that has to unlock the doors of this mansion of God. The little boy wanting to know why he had to be born can only be told certain home truths; but the deeper urges that keep life going here will be beyond his comprehension, till he himself comes of age and discovers them for himself. Hence, the Eastern philosopher has stressed that reason and faith should walk hand in hand to herald the birth of wisdom.

A romantic description of creation has been given in some of our books of wisdom.

In the beginning One alone existed, without a second. It was pure Existence. It was homogeneous. There was Consciousness of Its existence too; else, no creation and no life would have been possible - no order, no law, no art, but just dead matter and chaos. When there is consciousness of unity, there is peace which, in this context, is a synonym for bliss. This is the highest impersonal conception of God which is the limit of human speculation.

This Being wanted to taste, as it were, its own Bliss. Here is the romance. The sugar-candy wants to taste its sweetness. This is impossible unless it divides itself, multiplies itself. Therefore, the Being willed that It might become many, in order to taste its own bliss.

Two great truths clearly emerge from this, and we shall not lose sight of them in our discussions: (1) that there is and has always been and will always be just One Existence alone, underlying self-willed manyness, and (2) the quest, whether conscious or unconscious, is for the taste of Bliss.

When the vibration of the Will of the Supreme Being arose in it, there was manifestation. The huge conflagration sparked as it were into countless

sparks. Each spark was that Being itself - it was Consciousness-Bliss. But when it became an entity, at Will of the Supreme Being, and during this

process of this multiplication, Matter was projected - as spider projects a web out of itself.

That Spark of Being, the soul, now got involved into matter. Countless individual Jivas or souls thus brought to constitute the universe. This is the divine plan. This is the divine play. Now, they commence their journey back to the source. The sparks endeavour to get back to the conflagration.

The waters of the ocean which went up the as vapour, rain on the tops of mountains and flow down the rivers, wishing to rejoin the ocean. This is the Eternal Drama.

The story of this evolution is variously described in various scriptures. The saints of India and the mystic poets of the West have all tellingly told this story of evolution, We were inert matter. We grew as plants. We crawled as worms. We walked as animals, in search of happiness.

Now something very interesting happened to us. We had a certain amount of intelligence, even as animals. We hunted the earth for happiness -freedom from fear, satisfaction, etc. We could not find it. Instinctively understanding perhaps that the object of our quest was not in this earth, we lifted our fore legs and in an attitude of prayer, looked up to the heavens: "Oh, where can I find the happiness which I seek and which this earth does not contain?" It is when we thus lifted our forelegs and prayed, that we became human beings, bipeds.

As human beings, we found that our life and our happiness here were governed by "the forces of heaven" - the sun, the moon, the rain and the wind. The earliest man therefore deified them, prayed to them, and felt that if they were propitiated, they would shower their blessings upon him and keep him happy. He composed hymns in their praise; and they worked. Remember, he had the spark of God in him - the Consciousness that linked him to the Being that indwelt all creation. When, with faith and sincerity, he prayed, it worked. The efficacy of prayer has been proved over and over again all over the world by devout men who have averted famine, brought on rain, healed the sick and stopped epidemics, with the help of sincere prayer.

Prayers earned for man even long "holidays in heaven". He could go to heaven and enjoy the highest pleasures for a considerable time. But he had to return to the earth-plane again, after the merits earned by the prayer were exhausted.

Then we have a very interesting experiment. During the course of the performance of one of these sacrifices - religious rites which earned heavenly enjoyment for the performer, a precocious boy takes his father to task for giving away barren cows in charity. The scriptures enjoin upon the performer of the sacrifice to give away in charity all that is dear to him. "I am dear' to you, father; to whom will you give me?" asks the young lad. "To the God of

Death I will give you," replies the father, perhaps slightly annoyed. The father's heart had been purified by the prayer offered at the sacrifice; his words had to come true. The son goes to the abode of the Lord of Death. He demands from the Lord, Yama, the knowledge that only Yama could have - of what happens to us after we leave this mortal world. Yama tempts the boy with various material enjoyments, with a long life. The wise young boy rejects them.

"However long I live, O Lord, even then, at the end I will have to face you! Whatever objects of enjoyment you may bestow upon me, their enjoyment will exhaust only my energies! Keep them. Give me the knowledge I have asked for." Inspiring words, to meditate upon.

The Lord of Death then reveals the truth that the soul of man is immortal, clothing itself in a material body. Whenever these clothes get worn-out, the indweller throws them away and enters new ones. This Self is within the heart of man. He who realises this enjoys supreme bliss and knows that he is immortal.

Man's gaze which had so long sought for the Truth outside is diverted within himself. The peace and bliss that he sought in the objects of the world are now sought within himself. He discovers that they had always been within, but he could not see within himself and so he vainly endeavoured to find them outside himself.

My master Sri Swami Sivananda has an interesting little parable to illustrate this.

An old lady was searching for something in the verandah of her house. A young man wanted to help her and so enquired what she was searching for. She was trying to find a sewing needle she had dropped. "Where did you drop it?" asked the young man. "In the kitchen," replied the old lady. "Why do you search for it here, then?" "Because it is all dark in the kitchen!"

Just because we are unable to look within, we go about from object to object in search of happiness. We identify ourselves with these objects and suffer.

Four great truths emerge from our discussion:

1. We are Immortal, i.e., the Spirit in us or the Self that we are.
2. Matter is but a passing show, an outer cloak, changing and mutable.
3. Wrong understanding, wrong identification of the soul leads to misery of transmigration.

4. Right understanding, identification of the Indwelling and all-pervading consciousness leads to Bliss and Liberation.

As we go on thus evolving, the shell of matter in which our spirit has been imprisoned grows thinner and thinner, the light of wisdom grows and stronger. We who thought that the "shell" was the "Self" begin to understand that the "shell" is distinct from the Self. We begin to feel that the Self lives on and that life and death are but stages in this continuing existence. When the shell has been totally thinned out, then the Self is realised - rather, the Self shines without any obstructing agency, and the Self comes to its own as the all pervading Consciousness. When we identified our Self with the shell, we enjoyed, suffered, lived, died, etc., with the body. Now, when we realise the independence of the Self, we get the right knowledge and we suffer no more, but enjoy the quiescent bliss of the Self.

15 - THE WISDOM OF THE EAST

12th April, 1961

We discovered on the last occasion that we are the Spirit in Truth, and that the material which constitutes this body of ours and all created beings, is subject to change. Right knowledge of this truth leads us to happiness and liberation; ignorance of this leads to wrong identification of the Self with perishable body and so subjects us to suffering and transmigration.

What is the cause of this wrong understanding? The mind, the impure mind, the mind which is full of desires and cravings, the mind which has not been trained to look within. Mind is the mischief-maker. It is this impure mind which makes us forget the Real Self within us and also makes the mutable world appear as an Eternal Reality beyond which nothing exists.

Mind is our greatest enemy. Mind is our greatest friend, too.

The mind - if it is impure - is our enemy, for it veils the vision of Truth. The mind - when it is purified - becomes our friend, for it wears out the shell that covers the Truth and enables us to perceive It, realise It.

How do we recognise we have an impure mind? Why not assume that our mind is pure as crystal? Our Masters give us easy tests which we can apply on ourselves: if you feel disinclined to pray, if you feel sleepy and fidgety when you pray, know that the mind is impure and needs immediate attention.

How shall we deal with this impurity? It is of the greatest importance that we do not add to this impurity. That is the first concern. How is this done? How does the mind get more and more impure? By repeat-doses of the old morbid habits which clamour for repetition. These impressions - the tendencies - are there in our subconscious mind and they are continually thrown up on to our conscious mind in the form of desires and cravings. The psychologist who tells us that it is wise to fulfill these cravings is misguiding us. Wisdom lies in restraining these cravings, not by suppression, but by sublimation.

A great ruler of India, who lived for a thousand years, discovered this great truth after enjoying pleasures of the world for another thousand with youthfulness "borrowed" from his own son. At the end of this long period of enjoyment, he had to confess remorsefully that "desire is not quenched by fulfilling it, as fire is not quenched by pouring ghee (melted butter) over it."

But these desires are being continually thrown up by the mind. The Bhagavad Gita describes this process beautifully. When a man thinks of an object, an invisible connection is established between him and the object, The mind-

stuff flows as it were through this channel of communication. When he thus comes into contact with it, he desires to have it, to enjoy it. Desire has arisen. If it is fulfilled, it is bound to clamour for more again. Now or later it is bound to be thwarted. Thwarted desire assumes the form of anger. Anger is a curse. It clouds our mind and intellect. Under its sway man commits the most atrocious crimes. You have read in the papers just today that in a fit of temper a young

lady killed her own parents. Look at your own face when you are in a fit of this temporary madness, called anger - how hideous it looks! I think that this is one of the best methods of curing yourself or a friend of anger; hold a mirror in front of the face. When this temporary madness has overwhelmed the mind and the discriminative faculty, we completely forget our identity. A lady or a perfect gentleman who is scrupulous in the observance of the rules of good conduct does the most unmentionable things when this happens. He has ruined himself. And in this process the mind has received another, very thick coat of dirt, impurity.

The antidote to this poison is keeping our thoughts always on a lofty plane. A little introspection will reveal to us what our own defects and weaknesses are. We should note them down in our diary and then without ever dwelling on them again, we should endeavour to cultivate their opposite virtues. Cultivate patience and love if you are subject to bad temper. Cultivate purity if unholy thoughts haunt the mind. Cultivate charity if greed is the problem.

We should not even be conscious of the problem within. We should all the time be conscious only of the need to cultivate the virtue. Else, we shall suffer the fate of the patient who was given a bottle of mixture by a physician who said that, as it was made effective by a magic incantation, he should not think of a monkey while taking the medicine. This had the disastrous effect of always bringing up the monkey in the patient's mind, the moment the medicine was taken to the lips.

Thinking of our own defects and weaknesses tends to strengthen them, as the psychic energy thus brought in contact with these hidden evils activates them. This is a grievous mistake our psychologists make. We should completely and deliberately divert our attention from the evil to the good. Thinking of the evil, even with the best of intentions, will still have the effect of making the mind impure.

A woman of easy virtue took her abode opposite the one in which a saint lived. When the saint came to know of this, he took great pity on her, and was constantly dwelling on her unholy lot. The woman, on the contrary, was stricken with remorse and she constantly dwelt on blessed life that the saint was privileged to lead. They died at the same time. When the saint found that

he was in hell, he protested, but was told "Though that woman had sinned with her body, her mind was pure as she was constantly thinking of the holy life which she thought you were leading, and aspired for it; whereas, though you were outwardly holy, you thought of her and her evil ways always, and you were filthy in your thoughts."

In our dealings with internal or external impurity, our effort should always be to get "behind" this evil to the great spiritual power of God Who dwells in our heart. This is done through prayer. Sincere prayer can work greater wonders than we think. We are no longer concerned with the rays of the mind seeking their outlet through the avenues of our senses. We are no longer concerned with the battery cells (the id or the unconscious) where the energy is generated that throws up the pleasure-seeking impulses all the time. We are not even bothered about the mechanism - the switch in the case of a torch or the complicated psychological machinery in the case of the human mind - which triggers this energy into operation. We go right behind all this to the Man who holds the torch. We go behind even the discriminative faculty, to the Soul, the God within, the Witness of all the mental modifications, who provides the light for the mind and intellect to function, We appeal to this Holder of the Light to switch it off. This is prayer. When this is effected, no matter what an amount of energy the battery-cells contain, the light is put out - desires and cravings cease. Prayer is the weapon that our ancient Masters gave us to deal with this demon of the impure mind - and we should regain it.

There is another way in which the mind acts as a stumbling block in our realisation of the Truth. It is difficult to bring it under our control and fix it on the God within us, to pray. When it is fed on sensual pleasures, it is quiet for a little while, till it is fed up with one object and wants another. But when you place a spiritual undertaking in front of it, you will be wonder struck at the rapidity with which it can flyaway from you. It is this restlessness of the mind that destroys our peace, harmony and happiness, and makes us tense and nervous. If only we could get over this restlessness, we can all be tranquil and happy.

Our divine Master, therefore, insists that all of us should provide enough fodder for this devil to feed on - fodder of the healthy or right type.

A Yogi stayed as the guest of a villager for some time. The villager's young son served the Yogi and had won his heart. At the time of his departure, the control of a Spirit. The boy wanted to have that the Yogi offered to fulfil his wishes, as the Yogi had control transferred to him, as he had a great number of desires to be fulfilled. This was done, but the Spirit insisted that unless the boy kept him busy all the time, it would devour him. The boy gave him gigantic tasks, like building a palace etc., which the spirit finished in no time. The boy was puzzled; he did not even have the time to enjoy the pleasures that

the Spirit had made available to him; he had all the time to think of how to keep the Spirit busy. He prayed to the Yogi who appeared before him and gave him some instructions. The Spirit returned shortly afterwards, after completing the last errand and the boy commanded: "Put up a pillar in front of this house." "Done." "Go up and down, till I ask you to stop." The spirit was thus defeated.

The spirit is our own mind which constantly clamors for this or for that. The number of desires that keep coming up make it impossible for us even to enjoy the thing we have acquired! The idle mind is the devil's workshop; we cannot afford to keep it idle. Our Master comes to us with this magic wand of Japa or repetition of the all-powerful Name of God. If we let our mind go on doing Japa, or telling the beads 'mentally', then we build within ourselves a pillar to which the mind is directed the moment the work on hand is finished. The leisure moments are thus filled with holy activity; the devil-mind has no time to play havoc with our thoughts, feelings and emotions. Moreover, the Lord's Names themselves are very powerful purifiers of the mind, and they hasten this process. As we respond when our name is called out, the Lord within too responds when we call out His Name and prayer becomes natural, easy and effortless.

My master Swami Sivananda lays the greatest emphasis on the repetition of the Lord's Names. This most ancient way of acquiring complete mastery over the mind and purifying it, has received new life in my master's hands; and there has not been one occasion when He has not insisted upon it, and there has not been one man, woman or child in the world who has contacted my Master, who has not been told by Him to stick to the rosary, and to make mental repetition of the Name a habit.

This is also a great blessing to the stress and strain experienced by all in the modern world. The strain is built up as we carry it over from one activity to another, one piece of work to another. My master does not do that. As soon as one task comes to an end, he withdraws Himself into this back ground of Japa or repetition of His Name - and rests in it for a few seconds, before turning His hand to another task. The "carry over" is cut off, we do not suffer the least strain and we do not have a nervous breakdown. When the limbs are worn out after a period of activity, they naturally ask for sleep and rest; and since the mind has been trained to withdraw into the background of Name, the moment the last task of the day is done, it immediately slips into that background, and we enjoy sound sleep.

The ancient wisdom of the Yogi has given us these two powerful forces to contend with our own impure mind - prayer and Japa - and with their help, we can achieve the double purpose of enriching daily life with peace and

happiness, and of thinning out the shell that covers the Truth within us, so that we may realise it eventually.

16 - RELIGION FOR THE MODERN MAN

14th April, 1961

Modern man is dynamic, rationalistic and socialistic. The discoveries of science have brought speed into the life of man and awakened his spirit of enquiry. He has discovered the "how" and the "what" of many things of this universe. Incidentally, he has also discovered that what appears to be is not and there is an underlying unity in everything. Matter has been analysed to the atoms; and the atoms have been discovered to contain the electrons, the protons and the neutrons. There is one more riddle to be solved: who holds them together, and who holds the sun at a respectable distance from the earth, so that we living on earth enjoy the blessings of the sun's rays without being scorched by the heat. How far man's intelligence can probe and where that probe will come to an end - "thus far and no further" - time will show.

The entire universe is ever active. Man shares this nature, too. No one can remain inactive a moment, says the Bhagavad Gita. This message of dynamism whipped man out of the slumber of inertia and self-deception into which the false prophets of a previous age had led him by the doctrine that to act in this world was to invite reaction - the chain that bound us to the wheel of transmigration. The Gita calls him a hypocrite who sits doing nothing, but letting his mind think of ever so many objects. If we do not let the senses enjoy, the mind creates its own field of enjoyment and satisfies itself.

Hence it is that our Master Swami Sivananda calls upon everyone to come out into the world and to be dynamic in service, but with a difference.

This service should be selfless. This is the religion we need today - the religion of selflessness, of unselfish and loving service. We are all brothers and sisters. The entire world, not only the humankind, but all living beings should be regarded as one family. Our physical body is made of "earth" and when we leave it, it is returned to the earth. Earth is our mother who gave birth to us and who nourishes us. "Dust thou art and to dust returnest, was not said of the soul of Man." The soul belongs to God, and God is indwelling us. God is our Father, earth is our Mother. We are all the children of this divine couple. What they give us belongs to everyone of us. Whatever be our status, knowledge or prowess, we have no right to deprive our brother of his share of our parents' blessings. The sense of possession should, therefore, go.

A gentleman was taking bath in a river. A walking stick floated along the current. It was good. The gentleman caught hold of it; there was no one else to claim it. As he was heading for the bank, the cloth he had wrapped around his waist was slipping. It was more important to prevent its being washed away. When he held the cloth, the walking stick slipped from his hand and was

carried away by the current. Lo, he beat his face and cried aloud: "Oh my walking stick has gone." Isn't it strange that holding it in his hand for a few seconds should bestow ownership on him?

That is what we do with the goods of this world. They belong to the earth. They belong to all of us. We should learn to share them with all. We should learn to give, give and give. This is my divine Master's forte. I have not seen anyone else in the world take an actual delight in giving, giving everything to everybody. You should go and see Him to believe it. You will be amazed.

A correct understanding of this truth that the world belongs to all, and that we are all brothers and sisters under the Fatherhood of God, will show us how we can achieve perfect social adjustment here. For, whatever may be our concept of God or our own Self, unless and until we truly understand our relationship with the world, we cannot know how to adjust ourselves with what is around us, and we cannot attain purity of mind and heart, and we can not arrive at the Truth.

Our relationship with our neighbours is not governed by the Christian Teaching "Love thy neighbour as thyself", but by the profit motive. We have not learnt to give, but only to take; and there is no limit to what we want to take. Even if the whole world is given to us, we shall still remain unsatisfied. We expect to be paid for every little service we render. This expectation always brings disappointment in its wake. We are not interested in others' welfare, but only in our own.

What a Western businessman said during his visit to the Ashram comes to mind. He had seen that some of us were doing Asanas and Pranayama, some of us were worshipping at the temple or singing God's Names in the Prayer Hall, or sitting on the bank of the Ganga and taking His Name. He was asked to speak at our prayer meeting. He said: "People here practise Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga or Jnana Yoga. But, we in our country, practise Karma Yoga." What a mistaken notion of Karma Yoga! All work is not Karma Yoga. Is he interested in the welfare of humanity, without the profit-motive? You see advertisements in your papers: here is the latest equipment which will bring you comfort and pleasure, etc. Are the manufacturers interested in your welfare? The fisherman sticks a little food to the hook before throwing the line into the sea. Is he interested in feeding the fish? No, in catching them and killing them. The manufacturer of luxury goods is not serving humanity, but ruining us. That is not Yoga at all.

Yoga asks us to serve and love our neighbor as our own Self, for God's sake. "For God's sake, do this," cries a boss when he is annoyed; the wise secretary should thank him for this great admonition. We should do our duty, for God's sake, not for the sake of pleasing any person. Then we shall never feel

disappointed. We expect no material reward for the service we render. We feel that the Spirit that dwells in us, dwells in all, and that we are eternally united with all that exists in a bond of Love - and that Love is God. In order to attain Cosmic Consciousness, we cultivate cosmic love, and express it as selfless service - for His Sake.

And, as an instrument in the Hand of God. Let us not let the thought enter our mind that we have brought any great good, happiness or relief to any being on earth. It is not that, but for us, the world will collapse! God's Will is done here, as in heaven. We are only His instruments. How blessed it is to be an instrument in the Hands of God. To feel that His Will is done through us. He works through us and His Will is done, and we are glorified on earth. Unearned glory!

In a village where the inhabitants belonged to the warrior class, it was the custom to let suitors prove their valour before they were engaged to the girls. The chieftain's daughter had attained marriageable age. He found that the village was infested with cobras. He had it announced that he who first brought proof that he had killed a cobra would win the daughter. It was a ruse to exterminate all cobras with the help of all the suitors. But, it was disappointing that none ventured to do this! At last one young man turned up with the tail of a cobra. He was promptly married to the girl. Later, when the girl asked if she could have the head-part, too, so that she could make a belt, the boy replied with a mischievous smile: 'I did not find it at all.' Some one had killed the cobra and he got the prize!

God's Will is done here and in heaven. We are to be merely instruments; but here is the difference. We then attune ourselves to His Will. We are conscious beings, not inert objects like the fountain-pens with which a President signs a great Declaration, which are preserved as souvenirs. We are sparks of that same God. When we thus learn to work as His instruments, in accordance with His Will, we are enlightened. The ignorance or the "shell" of egoism is thinned out, and the day of our liberation is brought closer. "Thy Will be done" is not a motto of fatalism, but the open sesame for entering the kingdom of God, of joyous attunement with His Divine Will. We begin to realise that it is the Presence of His Spark in us that enables us to work, to serve.

And, we realise that it is the Presence of that Spark in others that enables us to serve them. We are not serving Mr. or Mrs. so and so; but we are serving the Divine Spark in them. If that spark departs from the body, our service would be of no avail. A doctor may give the best of drugs to a sick person; if the Divine Spark in the sick person declines to accept it, it won't work. This is what happens when a person is dying. All the wonder-drugs are of no avail then. The Spark had decided to leave and it will. Let us therefore realise this

in our daily life. We do not serve just a person, but the Lord in that person. Adoption of this attitude will at once lift the service to a very high plane. We shall look into the other person's eye's and feel the presence of God there. We shall no more entertain mercenary motives; but will be thankful to God for giving us an opportunity to serve Him and thus be blessed.

In this there is no superior service or inferior service, no menial service and no service from which we need shrink. It is all His service. Whatever falls to our lot we should do in this spirit. It is not necessary for us to run away from our homes and search for sick people! Wherever we are, we shall find poor people, sick people, illiterate people, people in dis tress, etc., whom we can help. But over and above all this, we should learn to do all our daily duties in this spirit - even the prosaic household duties and office work.

A young man took to a life of austerity and meditation. He sat under a tree, fasted, prayed and had automatically developed psychic powers. One morning as he was sitting under the tree, a crow sitting above had dropped its excreta on his head. He looked up to see and the crow was burnt by his psychic powers. He left the place satisfied. He went to a village to appease his hunger. He stood in front of a house and asked for alms. The lady merely nodded her head: "Wait", but was late in coming with the alms. She was busy serving her lord, her husband. At last she turned up with food. The young man started at her with anger. But she merely smiled back and said: "Do not think I am also a crow." He was stunned: how did she know? She said: "Go to the next village and you will find a man in the last shop. He will tell you." He repaired to that village: and to his horror found that that man was a butcher, not a saint or Yogi. The butcher received the young Yogi and took him home. There the butcher left the Yogi, again uncared for, while he was bent on serving his parents with great devotion. At last, when the butcher turned to the Yogi and said: "I know why you have come." The Yogi replied: "Yes, and I have learnt what Yoga means, without your having to teach me."

To perform one's duties in life in the right spirit is Yoga. The Bhagavad Gita assures us: "Worshipping the Omnipresent with everyone of his actions, one attains Perfection." Mark the word "worshipping", for that contains the secret. The service is worship of the Omnipresent God. It is entirely selfless and egoless.

This spirit of worship ensures that the service or the activity is sincere and efficiently performed. We shall not offer faded flowers at the feet of God. We shall not be inefficient in our work either. We do not seek a reward. To worship Him, to be an instrument in His hands, is reward enough. There is not mechanical regimentation in this work. It is full of love and devotion. It is performed joyously. There is no tension in such activity. This is the religion for the modern man. It is the religion of transformation of the heart, a new

social adjustment, a healthier out look upon life, and one that satisfies the dynamic, rational and socialistic modern man. Everyone living for "others" promotes commonweal and eventually realises the Supreme, Omnipresent Truth or Cosmic Consciousness.

This is the Doctrine of Karma Yoga, the favourite of Master. My Master lives and preaches this doctrine. May we follow Him and make ourselves blessed and the world peaceful and prosperous.

17 - CONSUMMATION OF YOGA

17th April, 1961

Though the Yoga of identification with the Immortal Spirit that we are in reality, and that pervades the entire universe, is so simple and straight forward; though the religion for the modern man is the continual expression in dynamic selfless service of all beings, as an instrument in the Hands of God, for His Sake, as His worship - why is it that when we attempt to practise it, it becomes so complex and difficult of achievement?

The answer is provided by a mysterious power within ourselves, the force of darkness whose lengthening and widening shadows spell the words "I" and "mine". They distort the image of the Self within and make us feel that we are limited individuals, finite and mortal, and that "you" and "he" are others - often our rivals and opponents. This wrong notion blossoms into the feelings of superiority and inferiority, likes and dislikes, honor and dishonor, pleasure and pain, etc. "I am a learned man," "I am rich," "I am honored," "I am insulted", etc. on account of identification of the Self with the mind and body. Along with this wrong notion there is the sister notion of "mine". The finite nature of this little I - which is truly the Infinite Reality, the Self, compels it to move towards the Infinity. Still in the realm of darkness, this is sought to be achieved by spreading the identification to the material objects around us and we feel they are "mine".

"Mine-ness" creates endless misery for us. This is very easy to understand. We read in the papers over our breakfast table that in a distant town a child drowned himself in a swimming pool. We laugh it over. Moments later a postman hands us a telegram which tells us that that was "my son". We weep and wail aloud in terrible agony. "Mineness" was the cause of it. If this wrong notion were not there, there would not be the heartbreak. If the money in the bank was not "mine", my heart will not break when the bank fails.

In order to get over this mine-ness, we should first dearly understand that the worldly objects belong to the world and not to us. We are but the trustees. God has entrusted these things to us in order that we may administer the trust for the benefit of all His children. If we treat them as "mine", then we get bound to them and bind ourselves to this world.

The boat can be and is really meant to be in waters; but water shall not enter the boat. We can live in the world; but worldliness-mineness shall not enter our heart.

The best way to achieve this is charity. Whatever God gives us must be freely and joyously distributed in charity. This is not just an Indian concept,

conceived by kill-joy Indians who found too many beggars loitering in front of their houses. You find it in the Holy Bible, too, when the Lord Jesus admonished a rich man to sell all his goods and distribute the money to poor people, if he wanted to follow the Lord. It is a universally accepted spiritual law. For, so long as we feel that anything in this world is "mine", so long shall the mind refuse to get uplifted towards God. Therefore, my divine master sings: "Detach-attach-detach the mind from the objects and attach it to the Lord." If we do not do this, we shall be committing the same blunder that four hefty, strong wrestlers committed when they got into a boat and rowed it all night, but found that they had not moved a foot, because the boat was securely tied to the bank of the river.

"Give, give, give" - roars my master. And, I have never known anyone who practises this to a greater degree than He does. Anything and everything in the Ashram is distributed free to everybody. Food, clothing, fruits, books - all that there is in the Ashram, just flows through the Ashram, never stagnating. My master assures us that "Giving is the secret of abundance". This paradox is proved to be true in His own life: a monk who entered the holy township thirty-five years ago without a penny with him has built a spiritual empire around Him - and He has all the time been giving. It is a great wonder. And, even here it is nothing that only the Indians believe in. You have it in the words of Lord Jesus: "Give and it shall be given unto you a thousandfold." This is the universal law. '

Giving and giving freely enables us to get over "mine-ness". We learn to do good, always. Society applauds the man who gives and does good always. But God the Indweller has different standards. He is not satisfied with mere giving, merely good actions. He wants us to be good, too, and to get over I-ness. When we do good, we satisfy the world. But in order to satisfy the God within us, we have to be good. Hence, again, my master says that these four words: "Be good; do good" sum up the essential teachings of Yoga.

To get over mine-ness by practising charity is easier perhaps than to overcome I-ness. Our Master declares that I-ness can be overcome only through self-sacrificing service, coupled with deep meditation. Even the will to live, love of life, should be given up. For the love of God - this is what the self-sacrificing spirit of a soldier lacks, we should be prepared to give up our life. Our master's example is most inspiring. During the early days of His life in Rishikesh, He was at the bed-side of everyone suffering from dangerous diseases like cholera and small-pox. He has often said, "If you have done such service even once, your heart will be purified and you will soon realise God." For it is the spirit that counts, as the mongoose revealed to King Yudhishtira.

King Yudhishtira, the hero of the Mahabharata, had performed a great sacrifice at which millions of pounds had been freely distributed and the

coffers had been emptied. As he was resting after the great event, he found a mongoose with a half-golden body, rolling over the sacrificial ground. When questioned by the King, the mongoose related its story. There was a poor godly man who was living with his wife and children, on alms. He had once to go without food for a number of days. At last he had a little food, and as he was about to take that, a hungry ascetic was outside the door. The children offered their share to the ascetic, then the wife, and finally the poor man himself - though they knew that they might die of starvation immediately. The ascetic who ate all that food was none other than God Himself who had come to reveal the true nature of the godly man. The mongoose who was watching all this rolled on the ground where the ascetic had eaten, and the few particles of food that were there had come into contact with half his body and turned it golden. "I heard that you had performed a great sacrifice and wanted to have the other half turned golden, too; but I am disappointed it hasn't." It was not the quantity that mattered, but the spirit of self-sacrifice. This spirit kills 'I'-ness and leads us to the door of Liberation.

There is no attachment to anything here. When Perfection has been reached, when the darkness of ignorance has been dispelled, there is no need for anything in this world. Hence there is no fear of any loss. The sage does not fear anything or anybody in this world. He has realised the Self of all. He is ever at peace and harmony within _ no grief, no delusion, no tension, no hatred and no attachment. He has realised, by direct intuitive experience: "I am the Immortal Self or Atman." That is the culmination of Yoga. May we all realise it in this very birth.

18 - INTEGRAL YOGA

19th April, 1961

I would like this concluding talk to be devoted entirely to the special teachings of My Master Sri Swami Sivananda. I owe everything to Him; and I am what I am only because of His Grace, His Divine Life on this earth and His teachings. But for Him, I would not have been able to come here. But for the fact that I had, during the fifteen years I was at His Feet, actually witnessed the truth that Yoga can be lived even today, that it is possible to actually live the Divine Life here on earth, I would not have had the courage to stand before you and talk on Yoga.

My Master has brought Divine Life into our very homes. He has changed our outlook upon life, our angle of vision, and brought about an inner transformation of the heart. That is divine life, as I have emphasised before. It is not an external mark or apparel; but it is the inner spirit. In fact, there is a specific injunction, a commandment in the Gita that the Yogi or man of wisdom should live and behave actively engaging himself in world-activity as would another man who is attached to the world. The difference should be that the Yogi works with a different spirit, a different outlook.

I remember an incident in the life of my master. An old devoted lady once came to the Ashram and walked into the office; after spending a few minutes there, came out and enquired where she could meet Swami Sivananda. When she was told that she was just coming from where He was - the office - she ran back, to discover that the man she mistook to be the manager of the office, the man who wore spectacles and an overcoat, and was busy at work, was in fact the sage Sivananda. The sage works to fulfil His Will, not on account of personal desires and motives.

There has been no dearth of spiritual teachers. In fact, it is difficult to find a good seeker, sincere in his or her quest for God. Aspiration is the first qualification which we ought to acquire for the practice of this Integral Yoga of Swami Sivananda. The aspiration should be intense - as intense as the desire which a man has for just one breath, when his head is held under water. If we have that aspiration, we can have God this very moment.

My Master places "renunciation" next to aspiration. This world seems to frighten everybody. By renunciation is not implied that we should all throw everything away nor run away from our homes into forests and caves. It is - here as in everything about Yoga - the spirit that matters.

There was a king who ruled over a kingdom in India. His wife was a great Yogi. Obviously, the king grew jealous of the wife's glory and popularity and

wanted to rise to her spiritual stature. He gave up his royal duties, went away to a forest, and began to practise asceticism in a small hut. The queen knew all about it, through her yogic powers. She assumed charge of the kingdom and waited for a few months. She then felt that it was time the king knew the truth and so, assuming the form of a male sage, by her yogic powers, flew to where he was and stood a foot above the ground, to inspire his confidence. As soon as the king saw the sage, he was overjoyed and felt that his day of enlightenment was near. But the sage said: "You must have total renunciation before you can be initiated into the Truth." One by one, the king first burnt the hut, threw away his begging bowl, and prepared even to destroy his body by hurling himself into the river. But, the sage said, even then, "You have not renounced anything yet. The hut, the begging bowl and even this body do not belong to you. They are part of nature. Renouncing them is not renunciation. You must renounce the inner wrong notion: I did this, and I enjoyed this. Renunciation of egoism, of vanity, of I-ness and mine-ness - that is real renunciation." The king, extremely grateful for this sage advice, prostrated himself before the sage and caught hold of his feet, only to discover that the sage was none other than his own wife! The sage resumed his real form and led the king to the palace, and initiated him into the Truth about the Self or Atman.

After equipping ourselves with this aspiration and this inner spirit of renunciation, we should proceed with the practice of the integral Yoga of my Master.

There have been masters galore in this world, who have delivered the eternal message, in a dialect suited to the need of the times and the audience they were addressing. All of them emphasise the same fundamental truths. But somehow their teachings are modified and misinterpreted by some followers. And, once again we have a teacher who reveals the truth. Our master's special contribution to the spiritual evolution of mankind has been his integral Yoga. The world is moving very fast. In spite of the tall claims of gerontologists that they have been able to lengthen the life-expectancy of people, we still find that even if we live for a hundred years, the time spent in spiritual activities or the time devoted to God, is perhaps just a few hours during that long life! Half is spent in sleep; a good portion is taken up by childhood and old age; and then sickness, worthless pursuits, work for earning bread, etc. Where is the time to think of God? In accordance with the spirit of the times, therefore, my Master propounds the integral Yoga for rapid evolution. It has been said that we should go up the ladder of Yoga, step by step. But my Master, in His supreme compassion says: 'Stretch yourself on this ladder of Yoga, contacting all the rungs at the same time; you will soon ascend to the top.' I have for the first time seen the escalators in the department stores here, and I now understand the master's new invention better. If we thus stretch ourselves on the ladder

of Yoga, the Lord's Grace will instantly take us to the higher floors, the higher realms of God-consciousness.

This integral Yoga also achieves another wonderful result. It enables us to bring about a harmonious development of all the aspects of our personality, without leaving a neglected corner for the onslaught of satan. There is a story current in India that a pious king who was being followed by satan had escaped from satan's influence (as satan could not break through the powerful, pure, sinless astral body of the king), until one day he forgot to wash his heels, during ablutions. It is said that satan entered the king through that unwashed heel. It has a lesson for us. If we neglect any aspect of our personality unspiritualised, evil will enter us through that aspect and we shall be far away from the goal, in spite of our best efforts in other directions.

A lop-sided development of the intellect or the emotional part, or the active aspect of being will not lead us to the goal. We may be the greatest philosophers, and yet remain far away from God. We may sing His names and dance, and yet refuse to see His Omnipresence. We may go on doing all kinds of humanitarian service without acquiring the right spirit. These had, nevertheless, been taught as independent paths or Yogas. But, then, if one could take to them quite seriously, in due time they were bound to lead to all-round perfection. It was given to our master to come to our help, to unify them into Integral Yoga, and give us the unique gospel of divine life by which we integrate our personality and grow harmoniously into Yogis in a wonderful way.

Our master Himself has said: "I have written a great number of books on all aspects of Yoga; but if I am asked to sum them all up, I would do so in just six words - serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realise. This is the integral Yoga in short.

We ought to serve all humanity, and serve as an instrument of God, for His sake and as His worship. Not only acts of selfless service, like serving the sick, etc., but we should learn to do all work, the performance of our routine daily duties in that spirit. We should love God. Unfortunately, we have already cut the heart up into bits and apportioned them to various loves: God the Great Being wants all the heart for Himself! The Indian sage reconciled these two in a beautiful way. He comes out with the truth: "It is not for the sake of the wife that the wife is dear, but for the sake of the Self who dwells in all that the wife is dear." This attitude at once lifts all love up to the divine realm. We can continue to love our parents, children and partners, but not for the sake of their little personalities, but for the sake of the God in them - subtly, imperceptibly, even without letting them know, we have worked a miracle. We are not attached to them or infatuated in our love. Every time we look into their eyes, we say: "Not you, but the God in you, I love." Then we give, give

and give. Give everything, and the greatest gift of all is the gift of our heart's love. There is a simple and often-ignored psychological law in this. When are we most happy? When we are close to one we love. Well, then, if we love all and give of our heart's love to all, we shall obviously be happy always. Then, we should purify our heart. For only then will the spirit in which we serve be right, and the love of our heart pure. Once we have come thus far, or advanced far enough in these four tenets, we shall experience the thrill of meditation without much effort or struggle. Meditation will become natural. And we are at the threshold of God-realisation.

All this should not be mere theorising. Therefore, my master has put the essentials of his integral Yoga in the shape of a small song, sung in the tune of the Maha Mantra, which I shall sing for you now:

Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare,
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare.

Eat a little, drink a little, talk a little, sleep a little,
Mix a little, move a little, rest a little, think a little.
Do Asana a little, do Pranayama a little, reflect a little, meditate a little.
Do Japa a little, do Kirtan a little, write Mantra a little, have Satsang a little.

A little of each spiritual exercise should be included in our daily routine and we should stick to that chart of daily routine, as Benjamin Franklin did. Then, doubtless we shall make rapid progress and reach the goal of life here and now.

That is the integral Yoga of my divine and compassionate master, Who is all Love. Love is the most potent power in this universe. Look what your love has done to me, a man who is not given to emotions. The few days I have been with you all here have enabled me to feel the tremendous impact of your love and affection. They have enabled me to feel the Omnipresence of God Who is Love. I have found these few days that His Protecting Hands have embraced me from those hundreds of pairs of eyes that I have met here. It has been a great experience for me. I shall never forget this glorious and happiest period of my life here, in your midst. Even I, a monk, do not wish to remind myself that this is the last occasion that

I shall be standing before you, and that on Sunday next a ship will take me away from you all, at Fremantle. Let us console ourselves that in God we are all inseparably united.

May that God who is Love enlighten us, guide our footsteps, lighten our burdens and lead us to the Goal,

I wish once again to remind you that whatever good thoughts have been conveyed here during these talks, belong to my master Sri Swami Sivananda, and that I have only done the duty of a postman. All that I am, and all that I have, belong to Him. May we follow His teachings and attain the goal here and now in this very birth. I am grateful to you all for the opportunity you have given me of sharing that knowledge with you all.

19 - YOGA AND CHRISTIANITY

Adult Education Board - 21st April, 1961

Even as men all over the world, when they felt hungry, appeased that hunger by eating, without having been taught by anyone else. Men all over the world, when they experienced the hunger of the soul, turned to prayer and communion with the Lord. And in this it is not essential for us to feel that the Truth was revealed to any one nation or cult and that it spread to the others later on. '

When we study the scriptures of Yoga and of Christianity side by side, we are often struck by their similarity in many respects. Even certain terms used sound alike: Abraham and Brahman, Adam and Atma, Christ and Krishna, to mention only a few.

Lord Krishna gives us the assurance in the Bhagavad Gita that whenever there is seeming triumph of unrighteousness over the forces of righteousness. He incarnates Himself to defend righteousness. We are told that Lord Jesus was the fruit of Immaculate Conception, that He was not of the same earth-earthly matter as we are. His Birth proves Lord Krishna's promise.

Revealing the Purpose of His Birth here, Lord Jesus says: "I have come, not to destroy, but to fulfill"; and that is Lord Krishna's commandment in the Gita: "Do not unsettle anyone's belief: lead them all, to the consummation of Knowledge."

Both Lord Krishna and Lord Jesus were interested in making themselves understood by the people they addressed: therefore, we find the same directness of approach and intimacy of language in their teachings. The scriptures contain homely similes, which the people of those times were familiar.

Both Yoga and Christianity exhort us to attain the ultimate truth of Unity with God: "Aham Brahmasmi" or "I and my Father are one." Both of them exhort us to attain this through righteous living, through the cultivation of godly qualities. According to Yoga, the door to God or Sat is Satwa or goodness. Lord Jesus commanded "Be ye, therefore perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect."

Both for a better and happier "after-life" and for attainment of God-consciousness or Christ-consciousness, we ought to be good and to do good.

The essence of such a good life has been proclaimed by one and all to be "compassion, charity, goodwill." "Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah" - "Love is the

supreme virtue.”, says the Yogi. Lord Jesus placed compassion as the foremost among virtues.

The virtue of renunciation has unfortunately come to be looked upon by the modern man as escapism, other worldliness, and pessimism characteristic of the Eastern outlook upon life of the Yogi. A closer study of the life and teachings of Lord Jesus will reveal that the Lord Himself laid the greatest emphasis upon the spirit of renunciation. For instance, when He asked the rich to give away all that they had and then follow Him. Yet, again, even in the East, the true spirit of renunciation is not properly grasped. It only means proper evaluation of things and acting upon this evaluation. The modern man gives the things of the moment, the perishable objects of the world, the importance and the attention due to the eternal and the imperishable Spirit. Only this wrong evaluation should be renounced. It has been aptly described in the Holy Bible "Render unto Caesar things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's."

The cares and worries of the morrow and of the world are not neglected or given up because of a desire to take the line of least resistance, but because of an abiding faith in God. Lord Jesus points out the examples of the lilies of the field and the birds, to show that they are looked after by God. The Bhagavad Gita assures us that if we were ever God-Conscious, that God would fulfill our needs. Therefore, Lord Jesus commanded us "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God," assuring us that all these things will be added unto us.

Even the energy and the power to do our duties here are to be understood as proceeding from Him. We are but instruments in His hands. Lord Krishna commands Arjuna in the Gita: "Nimitta Matram Bhava" - Be thou my instrument. As an inspiring parallel, recall Lord Jesus's inspiring words, uttered at a crucial moment of His Life - "Not mine, but Thy Will be done."

This wonderful culmination is reached through the practice of the Integral Yoga, of which my Master Sri Swami Sivananda is the modern prophet. Even the seeds of this integral Yoga are contained in both the Gita and the Bible. "Manmana Bhava, Madbhakto Madyajee, Maam Namaskuru, Maame vaishyasi Yuktwaivam Atmanam Matparayanah." This is almost a literal translation of "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind and with all thy strength."

Even after acquiring all these virtues, practising this integral Yoga and this total self-surrender, we have to wait for His Grace to descend on us, patiently. Impatience is a sign of lack of self-surrender. The Ultimate Experience of Unity, or God realisation, is His own gift. "Divyam Dadami Te Chakshuh" I will give you the divine eye with which alone you can see me - says the Lord in the Gita. "To sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give, but

it shall be given to them for whom it shall be prepared of my Father” - says Lord Jesus.

Finally, it is highly interesting to note that even the reassuring promise that Lord Krishna gives us in the Gita is echoed by Lord Jesus in the Holy Bible. "Give up your cares and worries, and come to Me. I will liberate you," says Lord Krishna. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give rest."

Whatever be the path we choose, if we pursue it, sincerely and earnestly, we shall reach the Goal and this is the assurance given by my divine Master Sri Swami Sivananda. Let us practise and realise.

This is my last appearance in this holy city. You have all been so kind and loving that I feel reluctant to leave. You have enabled me to realise my Master's Omnipresence. It is He who has spoken through me, and it is He Who has listened through you all. Through the hundreds of pairs of your eyes, I have seen His Loving Arms embrace me in the warmth of His Love. I can only say "Thank you". But assure you that these two words have never before been said with such sincerity.

May God bless Mr. Hew Roberts and all of you, especially my divine hosts Dr. and Mrs. Werther.