

SENSE
ESSENCE
AND
NON-SENSE

VOLUME 3



Swami Venkatesananda



Dedication

My Gurudev, Sri Swami Sivananda, used to treat all the conventional "valuables" with total indifference. Money, expensive articles, and such others that we value had none for Him.

But there was one exception: a piece, a scrap of paper on which He had recorded a passing thought. Everything He wrote had to be typed "three copies", properly checked - always by Him, and kept with different responsible persons - the first, Himself.

He once explained: "Money can be earned. Ashram can be built. But the thought, once lost, is lost forever."

Gurudev used to do this. He would record important thoughts after some lectures or talks.

His thoughts were from God. He regarded Himself and all of us as mere channels for their flow. They were sacred.

To assume authorship is one type of vanity. To treat them callously is another type of vanity.

Gurudev had no objection at all to other people plagiarizing His writings - so long as the knowledge was spread.

But He was "impatient" if they were allowed to be lost.

These flower petals are once again offered at the divine lotus Feet of my Gurudev Sivananda.

They belong to Him. They do not belong to me and often I have never had those ideas before.

I hear them first; they originate in the Feet of Gurudev.

At the Feet of my Gurudev in the reader's heart, I humbly dedicate this collection.

My grateful thanks to my Gurudev Swami Sivananda, who perpetually inspires us from within, whose Feet are the origin of all good thoughts.

May God bless you all.

Swami Venkatesananda

Foreword

A new volume of 'Sense, Essence and Non-sense' of the sage Swami Venkatesananda makes its debut.

These are gems 'recollected at moments of tranquility' - moments when the mind is attuned with the Divine - for it is only with such divine Grace that the nectar of wisdom begins to flow, the divinity within also begins to glow, and radiate the light of knowledge.

The modern world is in haste. Its destination is unknown nor its course chartered.

Caught in this velocity, the mind too, speeds on this precarious path. It has little time for lengthy discourses on religion.

Some signposts are necessary to redirect the mind on the road to salvation. These short, pithy and at times witty, but down-to-earth truths, each a self-contained moral, serve as landmarks where man must turn off from his present course.

They should have appeal to the young and old, the scholar and the layman. They are simple, void of any proselytising or dogmas, yet thought provoking.

They express in simple language the truths of the scriptures of the East and the West.

Of what is said may be sense, some of it may be non-sense - you take out the essence.

It is 'non-sense' in so far as it is not related to the world of senses.

Some thoughts make sense. Others may be just non-sense, due to faulty medium of their expression, but even they may provoke a great thought in the reader.

True wisdom is above the sensory, because the latter is fleeting, transient, changing, impermanent and temporary.

Truth which is related to Reality is lasting.

These notes are not to be studied as a book, but used to stimulate your own ideas and thoughts.

They are not cogently arranged for that is considered unnecessary for the purpose we have in view.

They may even seem to contradict one another - that again is the purpose - to enable you to see the same truth from different angles, which should be done in regard to any fact or problem.

Prayer

May God bless you all with health, long life, prosperity, and spiritual enlightenment.

May you all walk in the Light of God, with God with your hand in His, with the whole of you in His Palm.

Live in God. Love in God. Serve God in all beings.

May that Supreme Being dwell in your eyes, in your heart, seeing His Own Self in all; seeing God Himself in all.

May we thus swim in the Ocean of Bliss.

May that Peace that passeth all understanding dwell in your heart, radiate from every pore of your skin, bathing everyone who comes within the circle of your aura with that inexpressible peace.

May harmony radiate from you, dispelling the darkness of disharmony wherever it is found.

May bliss radiate from you, dispelling the gloom of suffering, misery, pain - physical, mental, moral and spiritual.

May God lead us from the Unreal to the Real, from darkness to light, from mortality to immortality.

Assert every moment of your life - I am not the body, I am not his finite, limited mind, I am the Immortal Self.

May you be established in that Self-Realisation right now.

Swami Venkatesananda

Ignorance.

A blind man walks past a treasure.

Ego

Ego is trouble.

To fight the shadow

Light a lamp.

Karma.

There are categories like Parechchaa Karma - which we do against our will, compelled by others - it is a fallacy.

Even here, the fact that we did it shows that we wanted - if not to do it - to please or obey the other person.

But, take the case of compulsory sati!

The girl enters the pyre against her wish, compelled by others

Here, she is not doing but suffering.

It is not Karma, but perhaps Karma-Phala, fruit of past Karma.

Karma-phala is almost always imposed. on us.

It demands very sharp intelligence to distinguish between the two.

Mysterious Karma

It works out through pain and pleasure.

It awakens hidden talents.

It develops compassion in others.

Even as the sun serves many purposes when it shines: manufactures clouds, gives light, gives life to all.

Essence of Yoga

God exists.

He is the life of your life, the Soul of your soul, the Inner Reality.

Ignorance or forgetfulness of this Reality is the cause of all sin and suffering.

Crush all prejudices, see God in All.

Curb the ego. Be humble and lead a simple life.

Remind yourself again and again: God is Omnipresent, He is in all, He is the All.

Treat all your activities as worship of God.

Guru Training

Guru training an obedient disciple.

It is often a mystery - He creates paradoxical situations.

It is like the cosmonaut being put into a simulated space flight in a lab.

Guru

Choose your Guru as you choose your bride.

If you like him, follow him - if you do not, leave him alone.

We are not here to tell Him what He should be.

How would you like a young man if he wanted to alter the shape of your daughter's nose?

The disciple's foremost duty is to strive to be a good disciple, and not to judge or to improve his Guru.

If someone points out a defect in Him, ignore it - and even if your mind assures you that the defect is there, ignore it - you do not want it.

We do not search for a huge fire to light a candle.

But a huge fire can be started by a candle.

The disciple can be greater than the Guru.

Probability

The theory of probability which replaces the theory of cause and effect suggests the operation of a free will.

In other words: it may be true to say that in certain spheres the law of cause and effect operates.

It is inoperable in certain higher spheres.

Alone 'Is'

What to do in order to let the Master speak?

The sun is shining, sending down His rays.

You are holding a magnifying glass concentrating them, or a prism which dissipates them.

Remove the glass and the prism.

The sunlight alone 'is'.

Criticism

The chimney sends out a lot of smoke at the sky.

But the sky is not polluted by it.

It is only the chimney that grows black and sooty.

Criticism will taint your heart, not mine!

Samadhi

Racing-cars are not meant for the public road.

Even so - meditation and Samadhi are not for the public display and for obtaining lesser goals but only for God.

What Peace

Read this with your blind eye!

I was listening to a Sermon and suddenly realised why it is said that philosophy promotes Peace.

It puts you to sleep!

Social Prosperity

It was realised that people could not pray with empty stomachs.
From this sprang the ignoble Tantrik system of the Five Makaras.
It meant prayer and social prosperity should go hand in hand.

Name and Form

Form is the grosser form of Name.

Subtle sound vibrations are extremely powerful, and they 'solidify' as it were into Forms.

Just as steam condenses into water, and water freezes into ice.

But steam is the more powerful and mobile.

Evil Thoughts

When you push an evil thought away, you naturally have to get behind it.

In other words, you have to be more wicked.

Do not do it! Go to God and let the evil disappear.

Brahma Vishnu Siva

You cultivate rice, preserve it in the barn, and then eat it!

It is not destroyed, but fulfilled.

Siva is not the Destroyer, but the Redeemer.

Rebirth

Rebirth may be in the same species - either human or subhuman as is suited to evolution.

The student returns to the Primary School for five years and is then promoted to Secondary School to which he returns six times and then he goes to University.

Reincarnation

It is precisely because God wishes that we should not spend our lives brooding over the past, and that we should evolve, that He has mercifully caused the memory of our past to fade out, leaving only the residual essence behind.

The corrective suffering is necessary not so much to glorify the power of God as to purify the human soul, and enable it to evolve.

Memory of the past is immaterial to this end.

How Brahma lost a Face

Our Puranas say that Brahma the Creator originally had five faces, and that in order that the process of creation should go on, the Lord took away one of the heads.

Esoterically, the four heads of Brahms represent the four Dimensions.

The fifth represented the Spirit.

This had to be cut away in order that there might be this World-play.

Vishnu and Siva

Some Puranas glorify Siva and say that Vishnu often got into trouble and Siva pulled Him out of it.

Some others say that Siva got into trouble and Vishnu saved Him.

Neither is superior to the other.

When our left shoulder itches, we scratch with the right hand and when the right shoulder itches we scratch it with the left hand.

Neither is superior nor inferior.

Both are equal.

"Both" are one - me!

Reality

The reality is both the one and the many for it is beyond them all.

It is like a forest - to speak of the forest as a single unit is to ignore the trees in it.

To speak of the forest as an aggregate of many trees is to ignore the specific character as forest.

Both are ignorance.

The Reality integrates both because it transcends them.

Dogma

If you want to realise 'I am God', turn away from dogma.

One is the opposite of the other.

Psychic Travel

Do you have to leave the body and go?

No, like the radio receiver, you only make the necessary tuning within.

Spiritual Experiences

Since Purusha has the prerogative to experience the Prakriti, the initial spiritual experiences vary from person to person.

But the Ultimate Realization is the same for all.

Even as our dreams are different - but the experience of deep sleep is the same.

Suffer

You ask why a good man suffers.

I ask, "Do only good men suffer?"

The wicked ones suffer, too, because it is the nature of life here.

Just because you think you are good, you feel that no suffering should come to you!

Along the spiritual path

The problems of spiritual lift are so very varied, differing from person to person, that though we might all help one another.

The path one has to traverse is strictly individual.

No mere mortal can take the responsibility of leading another.

If I carry a lamp to lead me along the path, and if some others care to walk in that light, they are welcome.

But I will lose my path and thus mislead others, too, if I blindly sign a contract that I will take others to the Destination whose direction I do not know!

In freedom, perhaps, both of us might soon reach the Goal.

Identification

Unnecessary and false identification alone is the cause of our misery.

The wise man, however, will not identify himself with the world nor with his own body and mind, nor the experiences that these latter have in the former.

Even in the Cinema we see this illustrated.

The wise one who remembers all the time that it is a show enjoys both tragic and romantic scenes, whereas the weak-willed fool identifies himself with the play and weeps or laughs.

God

We regard Purusha as consciousness, and Prakriti as inert.

But even this Purusha cannot eat lime and experience the pleasure of eating butter.

Hence there are others who regard the universe as the manifestation of Para-sakti, and God Himself as the static sakshi or witness.

Let us then accept them both!

That something in butter which distinguishes it from lime and vice versa is a mysterious power - it is God.

That something in us which experiences this is God, too.

Integral Yoga

Body: make it healthy, forget it.

Mind: control thoughts, concentrate and remove differentiation.

Heart: selfishness and greed are removed by service and charity - Karma Yoga.

Intellect: Scriptures and Guru tell you of His Nature.

Soul: meditate on Form and realize the Formless.

Realization: you may not even know - others will feel it.

You have not thought that you are a man, but we know!

Faithfully Assert

Unless the impurities vanish we cannot realize God.

Until then we must faithfully assert that God is in us.

People consider this foolish.

'When there is a cloud, the sun is veiled. But you still say, "The sun is there. "

Meditation

Purpose of meditation: growing in His image.

It is wrong to say that we do not know how to meditate and be oblivious of the outside world.

Everyone does some form of daily contemplation on something he intensely loves - only it is not God.

If the child or the beloved one is away and sick, one often enters the "meditative" mood.

Light of Atma

The same Light of Atma shining through the elements has different qualities, just as fire has different effects when it comes in contact with water, paper, iron, wax etc.

Cosmos

Manifestation is in a potential unmanifest state in the Absolute.

Rain-drops exist in a potential state within the rain-bearing cloud.

Eve exists in a potential state in Adam-Life-force, the will-to-live, lies in a potential state in the Atman.

When the unmanifested becomes manifest, it becomes the object of perception and there is the possibility of many view-points.

The unborn babe is a part of the mother.

But the moment it is brought forth, it is son to the parents, brother to brothers, nephew to uncle.

The manifested nature of God is colour to the eye, tactility to the touch, taste to the tongue etc.

It is possible to realize God with His nature unmanifest, just as we can have a businessman with his businessmanship unmanifest, for instance, when he plays tennis with you.

Man-made Idols

Man refuses to worship man-made idols, forgetting that his clothes, his house, his motor car, and the articles he adores and worships are man-made.

This repugnance does not spring from the idealism of the seer of Absolute Truth, but from base animalism which sees in the idol a formidable invasion into its close preserves.

Philosophy: Love of Wisdom

A proverb says: Knowledge is the perception of differences; wisdom is the perception of similarities.

Philosophy is Love of Wisdom and the sciences that investigate the facts and principles of reality, of human nature and conduct.

Perfection

Integral perfection alone is perfection. To be almost perfect is absurd. If one of your limbs is perfect and healthy and strong, and you are blind, stricken with paralysis of the other limbs - of what value is the strength of that limb?

Prosperity and Adversity

In prosperity is the seed of downfall, and Man becomes lazy and wicked. In adversity there is the seed of prosperity and Man exerts himself and is good.

God

"There is no God but God - Allah." True!

But if you turn away from the same God whom I shall call Vishnu, by the very act of turning away you negatively recognise a God other than Allah - Allah, the God you love, and Vishnu the God you hate.

Polytheism

An advantage in polytheism or pantheism is that there can be no exclusiveness! We have a million manifestations of God; two more do not make any difference! We therefore welcome Christ and Allah .

An European girl in Australia heard me say that we regard Christ, Allah, Krishna, Buddha, and all the others with equal vision and veneration.

She said, "This is indeed safe! We do not know who God is and by this method we are saved whoever it be!"

But suppose we regard God as only Allah or Christ or Krishna, and suppose, after we die, we discover that we were mistaken, it would be terrible."

D-day

We are told by Scientists that thousands of meteorites fall every day towards the earth and its atmosphere protects us from being stoned to death. Perhaps on D-day this protection will become ineffective.

Deal

The ideal is like a roof. Without it, it is not house. But you do not sit on the roof either.

Be practical under the ideal.

Photo-Communion

After the initial Prayer, also thinking of God with the attributes that we value, the whole thing must be allowed to sink into the heart - Chitta, wherein it should become Bhavana. Mental imagination is useless if it is not followed by this Bhavana.

This is like photography. The photo is taken outside in the light but immediately afterward the film is taken to a dark room for developing. If this is not done, the picture will not be the result .

Seeing Evil

You see light outside because of light in your own eyes.

A blind man cannot see.

You see good in others if there is good in you.

You see evil in others if evil is in you.

Seeing evil is itself evil.

Mind your Own Business

When you drive a car, if you are concerned about the behaviour of all the people on the road, you will crash.

God-filled

The mind asleep is like the circus-monkey in the cage after the first act, waiting to jump in for the second act.

The mind in Samadhi is like the monkey shot, never more to play his pranks. The only difference in Samadhi is that the mind is not killed, but sublimated, purified and God-filled.

Criticaster

The man who always criticises others is so full of evil that he does not or dares not look within!

Saint

Be ever mindful of your faults and the virtues in others, of your happiness and the unhappiness of others, wishing them happiness.

You are a Saint.

The Tragedy

What we suffer from today is a commercialization of life. We sell Life and in the guise of objects of enjoyment we buy suffering.

A Psychological Way

When Divine qualities such as Love are attributed to God, it is to point out those qualities, which if cultivated, will purify our heart.

In the Gita the Lord says that all, even contradictory qualities, proceed ultimately from Him. He is All.

But this cannot be realized unless the heart is pure, and in order to purify the heart, we should cultivate virtues. And for us to be inspired to do so, we should be told that they are His qualities and we should associate them with Him in our Meditation.

It is really a psychological way of approaching the problem.

Castes

You have heard that there were four castes in ancient India, and that in effect our society is divided into four castes. Perhaps the time is coming when each one of us should combine all the four castes within us, and that is perhaps the solution of present-day problems. We should be wise and share the wisdom of the Brahmins. We should share the heroism of the warrior, and protect Dharma. We should promote commonweal and add to National Wealth. And be Sudras and serve all!

Security, the Urgent Need

From a state of insecurity, the philosophers of the world have been endeavouring to rescue humanity. When the sense of security given by faith in a divine purpose is lost, man tries to replace it by building up substitutes by industrialisation and economic adjustments. We struggle hard to find the necklace which is actually around the neck. Yet it is now not so easy as it sounds to regain lost faith. The first step to a return to the golden age of Faith and a real sense of security, independent of external props, is to realize the value of goodness. If society strives to be good, we will love our neighbours. Then there is every chance of regaining that inner sense of security that comes out of faith in Man.

What's In

You say God is in you! Yet, see what comes out of you! Evil thoughts, harsh words and wicked actions. How can milk come out of a bottle of water?

Exposing

In exposing others' faults we pose as Saints, suppose the others are sinners and expose our ignorance.

Fragrance

The Mahamrityunjaya Mantra describes Lord Siva as Sugindhi - which is "fragrance".

It is obvious: after He leaves this body, it smells foul!

A Title

At the Governor-General's party on the Queen's Birthday, somebody said in jest that I should have been given a title too! Someone said Member of the British Empire - M.B.E. would be good. But where is the Empire? I already have a title, however - M.A.N. What more do I need!

Characteristics of the Good and the Evil

The Good are content to drop the extra O.

The Evil are greedy and so add a D.

When the evil oppress the good, they oppress God.

O (nought) is the difference between good and God.

Within You

Destruction of evil and protection of good is the mission of God - He is within you!

Do Nothing

"None of the Incarnational activities affects me", says Krishna.

Yet He came to destroy the wicked, often by means which seem to us unenlightened people to be unethical! Arthur Osborne argues that it was necessary for Krishna to do what He did. Yet, perhaps the solution to the problem is simpler. He did nothing at all - the evil doers' own evil reacted on them!

Mind your own business.

Mind 'is' your only business.

Avatara

Only when two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom come together does an explosion take place and water descends from the two gases.

Hydrogen represents evil - oxygen stands for good!

Breathe

The Universe cannot expand forever. The expanding Universe leaves a vacuum behind it which attracts the run-away planets to come together again. The Universal Spirit breathes out and then in.

Ten Avatars

The ten Avatars are true not only as proved by Darwin's theories, but everyone passes through the ten Avatars in every life-time.

Before birth the child is a fish swimming in the amniotic fluid; after birth it becomes a tortoise moving on its belly; then comes the stage when the young boy or girl plays in filth like a pig or rhinoceros. Then come the growth and the maturity which many people do not achieve at all!

Angels and Devils

Mythology and superstition suggest that man becomes possessed by devils and often he acts under their influence. "I am possessed by the devil Anger," is better than, "I am angry!" The former keeps "I" as a witness, distinct from the anger and capable of taking refuge in God, whereas in the latter case the "I" is identified with anger and hence there is no chance of escaping from it. Even if the second were the truth, I would love to cling to the first. But the second is not the truth.

Sympathy

When in sympathy, I identify myself with your suffering, your suffering does not come to me, but it is lessened in you. When I enjoy in your happiness, we are both happy.

Revelation

Revelation is not the monopoly of any person or sect or cult. Truth, Infinite, is revealed, unveiled, Revelation is like deep sleep minus ignorance where the experiencer is un-objective-conscious of the immediate experience. It is in the twilight of sleep-wakefulness that we realise we slept soundly; it is in the twilight aftermath of the revelation-experience that the Prophet recalls the experience; and when he has passed on from that to the waking state he is able to express it in language-twice removed from Truth.

Truth

There is a grain of truth in all ideas, objects and therefore philosophies. It is this grain of truth which glitters and attracts seekers.

Miracle

We must turn within and ask God for His forgiveness. But superficial prayer and hypocritical approach to this problem will never solve our difficulties. It must be genuine, it must be from the bottom of our heart and soul, in which case, the miracle is worked almost instantaneously. We do not however, cancel God's prerogative to forgive even the worst sinner, but then, unless I am able to contact Him, no forgiveness is possible and this contact itself is the miracle-working Lord within us. The moment that contact is established, all sins are forgiven because all sins are only shadows minus the original sin which is "Avidya" or ignorance of our own essential divine nature or God within.

The Heart

What comes from your head is fit only for the barber to shave or cut. Real Wisdom and Will spring from the heart and ultimately even the brain is nourished and sustained by what the heart gives to it.

Karma

Karma is only action and the reaction to which it leads. There is no word in Sanskrit which means "fate".

The effect of Karma can be nullified. When you sow a seed and immediately wish to pull it out, it is easy. You have to dig just the same depth as you did to plant it. But if you procrastinate, it grows roots which spread in all directions and it is difficult to uproot it now. And when it has grown into a big tree, it might destroy the foundations of your house.

Karma Yoga and Unhappiness

God within serves God in others. This is the right spirit. You and others are organs of the same Being. It is like the hand scratching the neck when it itches. What unhappiness is caused if your hand selfishly refuses to scratch! You suffer on account of the itch. In other words - if you do not serve unselfishly, you must suffer.

Yoga Tapas

The Self may be compared to a small vessel, or ice-berg, formed out of ice and immersed in the ocean. The vessel is nothing but water. Yet it has its own shape, and it will retain its shape until it acquires a little heat and melts into the ocean. The heat is Yoga or Tapas.

Realise

But one must realise Being - like Mat realise. Potentiality becoming actuality is to realise. Otherwise it remains as a hope or as a dream or a possibility. People are often fond of fooling themselves. Philosophy should become real, for the 'being' must be real to us.

Achievement

Arjuna, the hero, goes to the battlefield, then suddenly starts re-thinking and collapses. This is wrong. Do all the thinking you need to do, but once you have made up your mind, go forward and do not look back or waver. Many people have cultivated the habit of hesitancy and vacillation which blocks the path to achievement.

Even if there was some defect in the original plan, it would show up only when and after you had acted upon it. After the first phase has been completed, think again and plan ahead.

Jiva

There are philosophers who say that the individual is a composite of billions of Jivas! Like a rose-plant which can be cut into pieces and each piece will become a plant. The human organism also has such a faculty - only the reproduction process is different. That when "I" die all cells die is no argument to say that there is only one Jiva.

Raga-Dvesha

Cosmic Being exists and Cosmic consciousness knows it. Cosmic elements are its nature, and added to this there is Cosmic illusion. When under its influence, the cell assumes independent individuality. When this Truth is realised, Raga-Dvesha vanishes.

Accuse

When you accuse someone with your index finger, you accuse yourself with the other three.

Original sin

When God created Man, He gave him the supreme gift of free will. It was like the fruit which he had within his reach - but which, if he partook of it, would involve him in Karma. But Man misused it and sowed the first seed which started the wheel of Karma.

When it is said that we are born with "original sin", it means we were born with Karma, accumulated in past incarnation.

Prayer an Karma

Prayer does alter our Karma. For prayer itself is an action whose reaction is good. I may be destined to die at the age of 60, for that is my Karma. I now 'do' something - karma, to shorten my life such as taking poison. This takes effect immediately and cancels out the previous Karma. This is what prayer does too, in a beneficial way.

Optimist

Do you say the cup is half full or half empty.

The answer determines whether you are an optimist or pessimist.

I Digest the Soup

From the paper carton the soup is poured into the pan. It jumps into a bowl. It then flows into the cup. Then part of it jumps into my mouth. The other part is thrown onto the ground. The soup changed place, but I think, "I ate it, and I digested it." And I say, "The soup fell on the ground and decomposed." To a similar event there are two dissimilar terms. Nothing takes place, the soup changes place.

Freedom

Excess of the exercise of freedom will destroy it. I am free to drink a glass of whisky, and I am also free to break the glass. I have freedom of choice. In choosing not to drink I am not denying myself a pleasure nor surrendering my freedom, but exercising my freedom to break the glass or leave it untouched.

G-o-o-d

Good - God = O.

Goodness minus God or Faith in and devotion to God is nothing, valueless and useless.

Good - O = God. Goodness minus nothing is God.

(1) You should not and need not take away anything from goodness and you will realise God.

(2) Goodness minus negative is God.

When goodness ceases to be a set of prohibitions, but is positively acting, you realize God.

Desire

Evil does not jump into our heart from outside. It is the magnet of desire in our heart that attracts the iron filings of evil outside.

Penalty

If you do not pay the price, you will ultimately pay the penalty.

Wisdom

If you have X amount of knowledge and you reduce it by X amount, you arrive at wisdom - X minus X is nought!

In the analysis of Evil-Live-Love, we discovered the same principle: the antithesis of "I" or the ego-principle is O or Wisdom which expresses itself as Love.

An Other

You can never love another!

"Water and stone cannot mix - water can only mix with water. That you can love all, proves you are one with all. There is only one Self.

We are all one! The same Self dwells in us all. The same bowl of rice enters into us and becomes your flesh and mine.

Pradakshinam

We can only perceive the Truth from our own point of view. In order to realize the Purnam, the Infinite, we should endeavour to appreciate others' points of view too. That is the meaning of Pradakshinam - circumambulation or going round a temple or deity.

East and West

East is not East - West is not West.

Where the Sun of Wisdom rises is East - where the Sun of Wisdom sets is West.

Truth

You ask for immutable truth in regard to God. You say that the Law of Gravity is true irrespective of our opinions and feelings. Yes - such a truth is "God exists" or "That exists". But when you ask, "What is my relation to 'That'?", it may be pertinent to point out that the question is misdirected. You have to ask yourself. Your feelings may not be the same as mine. You may like your coffee sweet - coffee without sugar may be sweet to me.

Prayer

Prayer for a living or a dead man does help. If I am walking in the rain, you can help me by holding your umbrella over me too. But the effect depends on the size of your umbrella and my size. If I am too fat - too gross and sinful, the umbrella - your prayer cannot protect me very much.

Yoga Practices

The Yogi who cultivates self-awareness is free from tension, frustration and anxiety because

- (a) he is aware of his goal,
- (b) he is aware of his own limitations which of course he does not accept as permanent, and
- (c) he is aware of the ceaseless efforts he makes to overcome these limitations, and thus to attain the goal.

All these, particularly (c) are Yoga practices.

Meditation

Meditation is intimate awareness of the Reality - God or the Self.

Meditation is the concentration on the object of meditation or the Self, then saturating the mind-stuff with that object, so You are it.

You must enter it - not rest content with entering It into your mind-stuff.

Escapism

Since the body of Man is 80% water, he takes the line of least resistance and becomes an escapist. He interprets every law and tradition to suit his convenience - Preya, more than his spiritual advancement – Shreya.

Siva Lingam

Madame Blavatsky regarded the Cross as a Phallic Symbol. Miss Mayo called the Siva Lingam a phallic symbol. As this mud-slinging was going on we forgot that expressions like "phallic-worshippers" mentioned in some scriptures referred to people given to sex and sin and not to devotees of Siva Lingam.

Suicide

A man wanting to dive into the ocean stands on the deck of a boat and fixes his gaze, his attention on the sea. He does not want to grasp the sea with his body or mind, but he wants to offer himself to that sea.

Dhyana is like jumping into the sea. Sea above, sea below, sea on all sides. He is in the sea, yet he is different from the sea. He has no existence apart from the sea, but he is still not the sea. If he stays in the sea for a considerable period, he is no longer a man against the sea, but becomes one with the sea. As a man against the sea, he was afraid of the things that the sea contained. As one with the sea, he is the encompassing Truth, he is one with All. He has redeemed himself from fear, sin, and suffering. This looks like suicide only because we cling to the childish idea that death of body is death of Self.

Maitri-Karuna-Muditha-Upeksha

The fourfold attitude of Maitri-Karuna-Muditha-Upeksha is meant to capture for us the unity that meditation generates within us.

Maitri or friendliness towards our equals prevents exploitation.

Karuna or compassion towards the less fortunate forestalls pity - superiority complex.

Muditha or complacency or vicarious delight guards us against jealousy and inferiority complex.

The All of Mankind is covered by these three.

Evil has a different and difficult approach. Ignore the wicked. Cool your inner fires down.

In a new light you might discover that your judgment or opinion was perhaps wrong; if there is some evil in the other person, you might work on him with love and your own example - never by pitting the other evil with one of your own.

Fault-finding is as great an evil as lust, anger and greed.

For fault-finding

Fault-finding is as great an evil as lust, anger and greed.

Self Psycho-Analysis

Control the mental modifications. Mind includes subconscious mind too. As the concentration deepens into meditation, the whole mind becomes placid and lucid, layer after layer is brought into focus of analysis and your will exercises control over them too.

Alcohol

If I had the power, I would scrap the Ten Commandments which in any case few observe, and substitute them with one: Do not drink alcohol.

Ghosts

I was reading a story about ghosts haunting houses. The people concerned say they saw the ghosts in their bodies clothed as they were before they died. They had usually been killed. Often the events immediately preceding the death were "seen". I suggest that the ghosts are not in the house, but they who "see" them somehow slip back in Time and re-experience the events of those times when the events took place.

Peace

Swords will be beaten into ploughshares only when Man does not know the other use of the sword.

As the Imitation of Christ says: "All men desire peace, but very few desire those things which make for Peace."

Jewish Customs

(a) Not to utter the Lord's Name. He is indescribable - "Neti-Neti" - Not this, not this", is the best way provided it does not lead to forgetfulness of God.

(b) God's Covenant with Man. i. e. Man's religious faith should not be paraded, but kept a closely guarded personal secret as is the case with circumcision.

Cabbage

Of course, there are really no problems in this world, for we create them for ourselves. Yet, again, if we do not create them and then solve them we would be cabbages - with apologies to this wonderful vegetable, and not human beings.

The Little Ego

I am beginning to agree with those who are horrified by the formula "I Am He", for I see the difficulty inherent in the spoken language. It should "I Is He". It is not identification of the little ego with the Supreme Being, but it is recognition of the Supreme Being, after the little ego has safely been pushed out of the place it has usurped.

Deposit

The Temple, Dharma, a Sadhu, a Holy Man, and the Bank will give you only as much as you deposit!

Isvara

Etymologically, Aiswarya - wealth is "what belongs to Isvara."

It does not and will never belong to Man.

The only way to have it is to become one with Isvara - God.

Hinduism-Judeo-Christian-Islamic

The oriental religion today called Hinduism has also progressed along the same lines as its occidental sister, viz. the Judeo-Christian-Islamic. There have been at least as many revitalizing, reinforcing and reforming movements within the Hindu fold as in the other. But, with the essential difference that the reformer did not deform the religion but remained with it.

Bhagavad Gita

(a) Man must do his duty. If he does not, the social structure is disrupted. It is God's mission to uphold righteousness, that God is within each man. Hence Man should pursue Dharma and take measures as His Instrument to establish Dharma on earth.

(b) Dharma is the power of God which upholds creation and sustains and preserves life. Man should understand this and thus free himself from the feeling that he carries a burden of responsibility and from the sense of want which 'compels him to acquire and hoard'. Dharma works through him and others for mutual sustenance and protection.

Dharma is Love - which is unselfishness - Swaha.

Creation

What is the purpose of Creation? God knows.

How do you know that God knows? He who knows is God.

How do you know that someone knows that there is an answer?

Because there is the question! A question implies the existence of an answer.

Sandhyas

I love to unite night and day - the opposites.

Perhaps that is the ideal and so we are asked to pray at sandhyas - dawn and dusk.

Moderation and Evolution

Life is not Logical but Psychological

This seems to spring from the way God created the World. Was He too, confused?

He created the tiger, a carnivore. He also created the deer for the tiger's food. On the one hand He gave the deer power to run fast and on the other hand He gave the deer complicated horns which get entangled in the bushes and allow the tiger to catch the deer.

This tug-of-war ensures moderation and evolution.

Balance

God created discrimination in Man in order that he may see God. But then - if all had it all the time - the world would come to an end in fifty years. He also created non-discrimination and delusion in order that the world-play could go on.

Japa

We feel the closeness of God, and like a child near its mother we go to sleep. We turn away from God in our sleep and suddenly awake restless. As the child docs, we should give a cry - Japa, and turn again to God.

Truth

There are a few serious errors in philosophical research.

(1) We assume that the books, the material before us is all that ever existed, and forget that much of the original material may have been lost.

(2) We assume that the material contains the whole Truth and all the details necessary to draw our own inferences and conclusions. They do not. The author takes for granted contemporary knowledge and understanding and gives expression to what he thinks is important.

(3) We assume that we know what the author meant when he said what he said. We may be far wrong here.

The only true philosophical research is to practise it and rediscover the Truth and re-present it in oneself.

Haves and Have-nots

An unsympathiser of India gave me a catalogue of the sins of the Orientals for which they are suffering at the present.

So long as there is great disparity between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', revolution is unavoidable. It is brought about by two forces:

(1) Fear of the haves losing what they have and

(2) the frustration of the have-nots for not having what they have not.

Comfortable philosophising by the haves of the sins of the have-nots only increases the latter's frustration and hastens revolution.

Under-Stand

It is interesting to see how different people draw different conclusions from a single act of mine. This is

centripetal phenomenon. Truth is centrifugal where many radii lead to one center and is the recognition that many view-points are of one center.

The latter leads to understanding, the former to conflict.

I do not like to say misunderstanding, because I have come to realise that except in God, where we find Unity, we cannot understand one another. As I have always maintained, understanding to me has only meant Appreciation which is Under-Standing.

Antahkarana

Culture is the toil involved in shaping the Antahkarana.

When the same challenge is presented to two men of identical physical and intellectual equipment, it is likely more often than not that they will react differently! Because we act or react, not with our external instruments of action, but with the Antahkarana!

The education of this inner instrument is culture.

Body

You spend all your wealth in this temporary dwelling. You keep the bathroom spotlessly clean where you spend an hour a day. But what about the body - the temple of God, in which you spend all your day?

Christ's Sacrifice

True, it is possible for One who loved and identified Himself with the whole world to take on the sins of others, just as the municipal lorry picks up everybody's rubbish.

For a Divine One who is beyond Time even the future is Now.

What did He sacrifice? Did He not rise again? What was sacrificed? Only the Self's identification with the body. "Follow Me", said He. If we shed this false superimposition, then we are freed from sin. This is the mystic event alluded to in the statement that He died for our sins.

Murderers and Proselytisers

The murderer is as near to God as the proselytiser who murders the spirit of Religion.

The former is the more innocent for he kills only the body.

Emotion

Each sense has a consanguineous connection with the respective object.

When a tasty object is placed before one, the mouth waters. When the sun is bright, the eyes are dazzled.

In the Indriya - sense organ there is a certain receptivity. If the vibration of the object is just right, it feels pleasure; otherwise pain.

When the two stimuli - vibrations are just right, there is almost involuntary attraction.

Persistent response to the stimuli forms a groove and a habit is made.

A good authority on psychology recommends laughter to reduce tension.

"The head can rule the heart". Head is the seat of Buddhi - Intelligence, and the heart of Chitta - sub-conscious mind.

Ill-health can cause exaggerated emotional disturbance. Endocrine glands secrete hormones which can upset the emotional balance.

Practise Yoga Asanas and Pranayama.

Growth

Growth involves mobility. If the molecules of a seed refuse to alter or change, there will be no growth and there will be the crystallised rigidity of a stone. Spiritual growth is not possible if we refuse to accept God's Will which tends to make us grow. Our refusal to accept Him has made our life one of grumbling and grouching.

The Sage

The Sage who knows the validity of Being and non-Being and that which is beyond both, is silent in the knowledge that everything is as it should be. If the Divine wills, He plays His individual part in the cosmic scheme, which, by virtue of His special qualification of total knowledge is to illumine the path of mankind to such a goal.

Assume

"I see so much of injustice and inequality in this world. How can I believe it is the work of God, the Supreme Intelligence?" a friend asks.

In other words, you now assume to yourself the status of a judge with the Creator in the dock as the accused! There is a superior Intelligence within you which questions the Creator's claim to that title. The Rishi says that that Intelligence within you is God and the Creator in the dock is only the projection of your own impure mind.

Viewpoint

Possibility of contrary answers depending on viewpoint.

When you take a bath in the river, did you take several dips in the same water, meaning the river? Yes. Did you take two dips in the same water? No. Because the water is in motion.

Shall we ...

1. Shall we stop birth and death? - You will get very tired of seeing the same faces indefinitely.
2. Shall we allow birth and stop death? There will be no place to stand.
3. Shall we remove disease? There will be no value for health.
4. Shall we wipe out gambling, lying, stealing and other vices? The very definition of good will disappear.

These achieve a threefold purpose.

- 1 The wicked man is evolving through trial and error.
2. The mediocre man learns the lesson of goodness and becomes virtuous.
3. The wise man attains wisdom. Ignorance is the only evil. When this ignorance is removed by right understanding this very world shines as Good. The Absolute is not struggling. It is ever in a state of self-realisation.

Tuning In

Does a holy place have a special effect on the mind? Can resorting to a holy place help the aspirant appreciably?

Yes. But not if there is not the inner 'tuning-in' of the personality of the aspirant! The analogy is of the

Broadcasting Station and the Receiving Set. If the Broadcasting Station is powerful and if you take a weak receiving set near to it, it will pick up the music. But if the Receiving Set is not tuned at all, it will get nothing, even if placed within the studio.

Unified Field Theory

When you come across a contradiction of law and order in the nature of phenomena, you do not accept chaos as the rule of the Universe; you look for orderliness, because intuitively you realise - rather the perfection in you, your own Self asserts or manifests itself, that there must be an unknown law which can bridge the gulf and re-establish oneness. Truth is One.

Alone

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth from God.

Mark the word alone: while we shall seek to appease the hunger of the soul by the Word of God, we shall courageously resist turning the Gospels into loaves of bread, or bringing God down to the level of a dentist or a midwife!

Maya - Illusion

A. Is Maya external to the Reality? No. In the world we see two types of machinery. One like the motorcar requires an external agent to manufacture, repair, and renew it. The human body or the living organism, on the contrary is a self-maintaining and self-renewing one, which does not need an external agency but has a built-in mechanic! Even so the deluding agency which creates appearances in the Reality, is built into the Reality. In other words - It is the light, It is the prism, It is the different colors and It again is the perceiver of all these.

B. The child dreams of a snake and screams in his sleep. You wake him up but he still shouts, 'Oh there is a big snake.' You point out to him that there is no snake and switch on the light to prove it. But of course, if he keeps his eyes closed, refusing to look, see or understand, there is nothing you can do! He will cry, cry a lot, until there is not one tear left, and only after his sighs have shaken the very root of the house will he wake up to the Truth.

C. Concerning the behaviour of the single electrons, Ernst Zimmer says: "An exact statement is impossible. The uncertain relations depend upon the dual nature of light and matter which have nothing to do with the inadequacy of our present apparatus, for a perfect apparatus would still not enable us to pass beyond these set limits."

Maya cannot be understood by the mind which reacts on it.

Unchanging

A changing object cannot assert the existence of an unchanging one.

Observers in airplanes flying at the same speed might think that the other one is stationary. To a plane flying very fast, another flying slowly at a great distance off will appear to be stationary.

We cannot positively assert that India did not change its position on the 'surface or the earth' a few years ago.

Geologists have proved that the earth's crust shifts, in a million years, say ten miles. The alteration in position over a decade is negligible and hence convention has it that the earth is stable. We who are changing positions cannot assert that the position of the sun does not change. Only that which is changeless and eternal can know that which is changeless and eternal. The very fact that within our innermost self there is a conviction of the existence of a changeless eternal Being is proof enough that the source of that conviction in us is eternal and unchanging.

The Sentence

I wonder, if in the case of all crimes, the judge were made to sit alone in a chamber and compelled to listen through a public address system to the proceedings of the Court, or read arguments, in which no names were mentioned, would that not materially alter the sentence? I am inclined to say it would. That is impartial, impersonal and detached to a degree, for the bias of the judge is ineradicable.

Moral Code

A moral code is a social expedient which help promote harmony, although never establishes it. In India this has been evolved from the conduct of "ideal" men and women of a given generation who in their turn have followed the examples of others before them.

Hopeless?

How many Prophets, Saviours, Saints and Sages have sought to establish righteousness!

Yet, see what the world is today!

Perhaps it is a hopeless world.

Truth

We also see that Truth has always triumphed and falsehood has not! If the world is hopeless, it would have blown up long ago! There it is still, flourishing! Ah, then, there is something wrong in me!

Death

The Hindus anticipate the triumphant conquest of the world by the Lord as Kalki. The Christians believe in the imminent second coming of Jesus. The descriptions of these two events strangely tally with each other. And they together agree with the description of the explosions of the hydrogen bomb and what Oppenheimer thought when the first bomb was exploded - 'I am the all-destroying death - Gita.

The inference is forbiddingly horrid. Yet, we have to face the Truth. The Buddhists, especially the Chinese and Tibetans believe that the next Buddha will be Maitreya, the Cosmic Friend. This is the silver lining in the atomic cloud!

Chitragupta

We accept the Day of Judgment and also the hidden Record - Chitragupta. But what no one can accept is that all of us are to remain suspended and that all of us will be judged on the same day. Even a judge in our law courts would not want his work to accumulate or to double-punish the "early" sinners by keeping them under detention without trial.

Isolation

Isolation is not escapism but an essential preliminary to fuller and effective participation in social welfare.

The Good Example

It is rare that people copy someone's good example! Yet, they will pounce upon a defect in a leader and copy it in a magnified form! Hence, Krishna says, 'If I do not work, people will follow my example.', not that if He did work, people would necessarily follow that!

Decomposing

The difference between living and dead bodies is this: the dead body does not have the "I am" consciousness.

There is some kind of 'life' which does the work of decomposing.

When the "I am" was in the body, the life-force worked to preserve the body to keep it together and add to its mass. The moment it leaves, the body is given over to outer nature, and the whole process is reversed and the body broken down.

Happiness

God is our Mother who does good. Even when in pain, there 'is some future good.' This attitude makes you ignore present evil and look forward to future good - which is mentally had now - even as day follows night every day, happiness will be yours now and later too.

God's Grace

Now in the same chamber called "I" are two forces which are divine and undivine. There is inner conflict. By God's Grace, the positive - divine slowly overcomes the negative - undivine. When thus the little 'I' is completely annihilated, the Supreme "I" alone shines.

The Same

Instead of worrying our little heads over the differences that exist among the religions, we really ought to be filled with wonder that, though the various Prophets lived in different countries and times, their fundamental teaching, their basic doctrines were the same.

Lust

Undoubtedly we are surrounded by and immersed in a perfect life: a complete, normal, happy, sane, harmonious and peaceful existence. But only as much of this life as we embody will really become ours to use." - (E. Holmes).

Herein lies the key-distinction between East and West. It is the embodiment that limits. East asks you to rise above embodiment and realise Infinite Life. West demands that infinite Life should be embodied in you! Why? To make it "ours to use!" This lust destroys the very foundation of Spiritual Life.

Neighbour's Welfare

We speed along to save time. But speed overtakes us and we do not have any time at all. Leisure and contemplation are most expensive. Competition is the rule. Charity has to be wrested from man. The Bhagavad Gita cries a halt to this downward trend and makes man take note of himself and treat his neighbour's welfare as his own.

Revelation

Blind faith in so-called revelation can be as disastrous as blind faith in empirical science. Kierkegaard has beautifully explained the miracle of revelation. Our scripture assures us that though "the Self chooses him to whom It reveals itself" - is true, it is up to us to make ourselves fit for being chosen. The ego which feels "fit" has to die. God is not a whimsical monarch. If you have arrived at the threshold and unlock it, the door of revelation shall be opened unto you. Revelation is not the monopoly of any person or sect or cult.

Yoga

Some people say that Christ did not specifically mention Yoga, and so it is un-christian. Neither did He mention motor-cars!

Self-Realisation

Self-Realisation is inevitable. All the instincts are ultimately meant to enable man to express himself, to realise his latent powers, and to manifest them.

Purity

However hard you try, you cannot see your face in the mirror unless it is clean and steady.

Likewise in Yoga, purity is important.

Revelation

God does not unnecessarily delay. Three things are vital before the Revelation:

1. The highly inflammable emotional part of our personality has been thoroughly insulated by stability.
2. The "doubting Thomas" of our intellect has been inspired by faith, and
3. The blinding cataract of the little 'I' has definitely been removed by (a) total submission to His Will and (b) complete introversion of the outlook.

Out of these three, unfortunately we can never be judge. He does not make us wait unnecessarily. If we have to wait till eternity, it is necessary for us. Have we made sure in regard to the above three?

Spiritual Experiences

A word of caution with regard to spiritual experiences. As with human love, so with God-love. Rationalisation kills it. The moment you become aware of the exalted privilege, it is taken away. The ego shall not be permitted to welcome God. But even when you think that the experience has ceased, it has only been assimilated. There is no loss in the words of Krishna.

Matter and Spirit

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin had equally deep feeling for the material world through his geological and paleontological studies as for the world of the spirit. He was aware of the essential unity of matter and spirit being two aspects of one "cosmic stuff".

Ultimately it is undeniable truth that God alone is and even the distinction between matter and spirit is arbitrary.

Maya

World is enveloped by Maya - illusion. The individual is further enveloped by Avidya - ignorance. To admire the beauty of a male actor playing a female role is Maya. But if you want to marry "her", it is ignorance!

The Goal of Life

Plays are of three kinds: dolls, shadow play, and drama.

Nature consisting of the elements is like the shadow play. We see the order and power and marvel at them. Behind these shadows is One Reality, which is God.

Animals are like dolls. They, too, obey His Will, function in His Consciousness, although completely unaware of it.

Man plays his part in the Drama. He is partly conscious of the role and in the heat of the moment is also apt to forget the Director. If he is ever fully conscious of the play and of his role in it, and also that it is the Director Who responsible for the whole show, he will get more credit and glory than the Director will. That man has the goal of life.

Understand

How does a bird know how to fly? How do monkeys and other beasts of the forest know of their powers and of their strength?

We often use the word "instinctively" without reflecting for a moment on its true significance. Instinct is inherent, knowledge. Pursuing this line of argument do we not come to the conclusion that that knowledge is latent in all things? That knowledge is spiritual. Spirit is everywhere clothed in matter, which is only denser, coarser or disordered Spirit. The denser it is, the less clearly does it reflect the Spirit or knowledge. The finer or better ordered it is, the more truly it reflects the Spirit, This re-ordering of the components of matter is the privilege of Man! Animals and plants obey divine Will, Man understands it!

Turn Within

A desire to know or realise Self is important. Turn within for answers.

Suffering

The devotee does not suffer in reality! Our ancients painted pictures of such "suffering" merely to show us that the devotee rejoices even under such conditions, whereas you, with all your wealth, are still miserable.

Temple

The temple is like a lamp. The lamp does not merely illumine itself, but it throws light onto other objects as well. The light spreads. The temple is like a lamp. It redirects man's gaze towards God and in a wonderful way opens a temple in every heart.

Conscience

Conscience is like the watchman of your house. When he repels an intruder's attack, and you feel that he disturbs your peace at night, and you lock him up, you are the loser! The thieves will directly attack you. Yet, so faithful is the guard, than even from the "lock-up" he goes on warning! Conscience is the watchman. When conscience pricks by fighting invading evil, the wicked devil dislikes it. We lock conscience up, ignore it, muffle it. Yet, it goes on warning us, though its voice may be enfeebled.

Indivisible duality

The universe is like the ocean in which the fish bodies are formed, preserved and dissolved. The ocean of five elements surrounds us linking the several bodies which are consolidations of the elements. We are really one and indivisible.

Duality and hence individuality illusory. Individuality is indivisible duality.

Atonement

This is not one word. It is "at-one-ment", which holds the clue and the key to the whole mystery.

Our atonement is when we become at one with Lord Jesus. Then our sins are wiped out. How can we become one with Him? When we realise Him within us. At that very moment we will also crucify the little ego within which stands between the soul and Christ.

Good and Evil

Do not use arguments relating to cosmic consciousness when you are discussing good and evil or the creation.

If, while I am alive and awake, I walk about naked, I will be accused of indecent exposure. But if my clothes catch fire, and I am lying dead, no such charge will be against me.

Love and Justice

People unnecessarily confuse themselves over the two propositions: God is Love - God is Just.

They expect love to be lenient and lax, law to be exacting and severe. They visualise the two as being poles apart and not characteristics of the same Being. But the solution lies in understanding that the Law is the operation of Love, and Justice is the expression of Love.

The mother does not give medicine to her child out of malice, but out of love. It is needed to restore health to the child. The judge punishes the criminal for the love of society and the criminal's own ultimate good.

Love and Hate

Love, even if it is gross and physical, I regard as good. Hate, even of evil, I regard as demoniacal.

Good Nor Evil

There is neither good nor evil, only thinking makes it so - said Shakespeare. There are three streams of which Creation is composed : Divine or Satwic, Human or Rajasic, Animal or Tamasic.

We have been given the choice by God to swim in any of the currents. When we swim in the Tamasic current we see evil.

Good and Evil

In personal worldly life, the seeds of good are contained in evil in the form of remorse, repentance, etc.. The seeds of evil are contained in good in the form of conceit, self-righteousness etc. So we swing from one to the other.

Happiness

If we live only to promote others' happiness, we need never grow old. This doctrine is often twisted to appear as though it involves large gifts and sacrifices. It is nothing of the kind. You can promote the others' happiness by just a kindly smile and a loving look. It can bring sunshine not only in their lives but into their very souls! Radiate happiness and you do all the Saints and Sages in the world put together.

Worship

It is good to construct a Temple - Church within us and literally through the entire process of worship of God.

Widening

"The only begotten Son of God" is for those who read only the Bible. In the same way as the statement. "All other Avatars were partial, but Sri Krishna was the Lord Himself", is for the devotees of Sri Krishna. Mr. X is Mrs X only partner and vice versa. They do not like to like to associate one another with anyone else and this feeling binds them together.

Even God who is Cosmic Being lends Himself to be regarded by individual souls, each one claiming Him as his own and the manifestation as the only one possible. Narrowness of the concept of God does tend to deepen our faith. We should guard against this turning into the Ocean of Truth, for it will destroy us. Widening of the concept is good, especially in the modern context, but the width should not make the faith shallow, as for instance you smash a plastic container and make it flat and wide.

Strangers

As one grows in spirituality, one will find that there are no strangers at all in the world. One's mind revolts at the least idea of a stranger.

Diversity

We have made the mistake that classes, castes, creeds and religions have created conflicts and have, therefore, endeavoured to level them up. This mistake has concealed the root which is diversity itself. Classes have not created conflict. But, conflict creates classes. This conflict is not caused, but is the cause; its own cause is the diversity which lies within the heart or soul of Man.

Understanding and Fellowship

At a time when science recognises an elder brother in religion, it is proper for us to pause and reflect over what religion has to offer us in order to ennoble and enrich our lives. From Karl Marx's earth-earthy denunciation of religion: "Religion is the opium of the masses!" - to Einsteins heart-warming pronouncement: "The cosmic religious experience is the strongest and noblest mainspring of scientific research," - world - thought has covered much ground. The machines that have rolled ruthlessly, relentlessly and remorselessly, "Soulless and Godless", products of Marxian philosophy, have driven sane men to the feet of God, where, kneeling in prayer, they find fruitful companionship in the wiser scientist who finds in religion the door to creative thought, wisdom, understanding and fellowship.

Some Point and Some View

If the following makes no sense: take it as fact.

I knocked at his door and asked him, "Are you happy?"

"No" he said, "help me to get rid of my sorrows."

"I cannot" I replied, "but you can help yourself."

"Why did you come?" he barked, "and knock door?"

"Just to tell you that."

Co-operation

Co-operation is when I always obey you, is it not?

Unity

Enemies hate me, friends dislike me. See the unity among all of them equally. And it is easy for me to love them all equally.

Humble

A humble understands - stands below a mighty man - the only way in which the latter can be made to bow down.

Enough of it

Why do people talk of, listen to, and applaud peace, altruism?

Because they do not find it in or around them.

People shut their ears to talk of vice, sin and desire, because they have enough of it within.

Humility

A lady in Toulouse said: "I love to meet the poor and the downtrodden."

Perhaps, she craves for their admiration?

I love to be with the rich and the powerful, because they will not respect and honour me, and they will thus preserve my humility - with the selfish who will guard me against my own selfishness - with the wicked who will save me from public approbation.

Lucky People

Some people have friends who love them and enemies who hate them.

Some lucky people have friends who love them, and enemies who sympathise with them .

Some others have enemies who despise them and friends who dislike and disapprove of them.

Thankfull

When I think of death, disease and destruction, violence, exploitation - I look up to God and thank He made our life short and death inevitable.

Clever

"You must set the example, " you say. But you do not tell me you wish to follow that example.

When you say I must set an example, you merely say that I must comply with the image of the exemplary man you have in your mind.

Why did you build that image within yourself? For your own benefit, profit, to suit yourself. And you would not like me to be other than that image - I am ruining your business.

So, you call me a great man and demand as its price that I must set an example.

Aren't you clever!

Reincarnation

The Jiv-Atma could be an atom, the "root" atom, around which the body-mind complex has accumulated, though they are other atoms. The root atom has a computer build around it - the chitta which registers all its actions and experiences.

At the body's death this atom surrounded by the computer leaves the body and is then attracted to that situation which is ill tune with the vibration-frequency of the atom - guided by the computer which is now the karma.

Computer

This computer takes the impressions of the good and bad actions that proceed from the person - persona is the mask and the computer itself serves as a screen, a mask or a cloud covering Cosmic Being-Consciousness, and the pleasant and unpleasant experiences that enter the computer or the mask from outside. Of these the good actions - called Satva, have the capacity to make the mask transparent, whereas evil actions, which are Tamasic, though they may be mixed with Rajas, make the mask or the computer dense and opaque. In the latter case, the Light of Consciousness does not reveal Itself, and this computer-mask-cloud floats around from one "body" to another, one incarnation to another, till in course of time, after several life-times of good actions, the mask becomes completely transparent, in which case it is as good as non-existent and Self-realisation has been attained.

Fragmentation

In the self imposed darkness of hypocrisy, Man goes against his own nature, indulges animal passions, and then blames or justifies himself - with the result that his personality is split into several fragments. This inner fragmentation gives rise to fears and anxieties, worries and agonies. He does not want to face himself - and hence he cannot meditate. He does not want to face himself - and hence his need to rush around constantly, now doing something, now undoing something else, now acquiring something, now destroying something else. This undivine life will not cease unless and until man lights the lamp of inner awareness - this light is divine, and the life that is characterised by this inner light is divine life, this agony will not cease. Any attempt to rectify the deficiency will only add to the trouble.

Sabda-Brahman

What is needed is to look within and enquire - not to judge, to condemn, nor to condone - and that is what Krishna meant when He said "Jijnasurapi Yogasya sabda brahma-ti vartate. Even the seeker or enquirer into Yoga goes beyond Sabda-Brahman.

Pain and Plesaire

Pain is the nature of the world. Pleasure keeps it going.

Disappointment

Disappointment saves you from making too many appointments.

"I"

To Moses the Lord said "I am".

He being the One without a second did not need a Name.

Since then "I" has been deified and the capital letter used.

Now, when you use "I", you are truly referring to that "I".

“My”

Renunciation must be of the objects of my creation, not of those which I have not created. House, clothes and even body are God's creation. But the self-arrogating feeling “This is my house” etc, is my own creation. which must be renounced.

Knowledge

Do not say "Knowledge of the Self", but “Knowledge that is the Self."

God is Within

Believe all, trust only God. God is within. Listen to all and then, in prayer, listen to Him. Of course, it is possible for His voice to get mixed up with the voice of your own ego. Hence, it is not always infallible. But even then, there is this great advantage, viz., you will never blame anybody for whatever happens - this will purify your mind making His voice clearer.

Inspiration

If you want inspiration, breathe properly - this is what “inspire” means. The quality of inspiration depends upon the completeness of expiration. Die to live in the Eternal.

Justice

Is there justice in this world? Don't we often, almost always, see wicked ones - who are powerful too, prospering and justifying their aggressive exploitation of the weaker people. “ We civilised them, we conquered them, we made them work, we saved them.” Superficially there is nothing but injustice in this world. Yet, if you look deeper, you discover that the aggressor buys material prosperity at the expense of peace and sanity.

Again, there appears to be injustice only when you restrict your vision to a short life-span. When you next ill-treat a poor, weak "foreigner", remember that he may be reborn as your grandson and demand justice in your old age. The all-seeing Eye of Truth cannot be cheated.

Planets

Do planets influence our character at birth? What is the relationship of environment and character?

In answer, I might cite the example of fish and water. Does it develop the gills because of water? Or does it live in water because it has gills? The two are simultaneous. the Truth is that it is fish!

I bring my own basic “character” from my own past birth - karma, samskara, dharma. Naturally, therefore, the planets are in certain positions at my birth-hour, and my environment is such-and-such - to accord well with my character and vice versa.

The Shadow of the Guru

When you follow the Guru who is the Light of Truth, make sure that you have kindled the Light of Truth in yourself, that you are also the Light - otherwise you will walk in the darkness of the shadow that the human personality of the Guru casts behind Him.

Differences

Some people say: to declare that all religions are one is a superficial view, an act of escapism which turns a blind eye on the truth of the essential differences.

Can't we look at it this way?

1. In the initial stages of misunderstanding and controversy, there are sharp differences.
2. In the initial intellectual understanding which is superficial there is an essential unity among religions.
3. In the semi-deep understanding once again there are vital differences - unbridgeable gulfs.
4. In the deepest understanding - beneath these gulfs of separation there is a great unity, as there does exist beneath the surface of the earth.

Witness-consciousness

Witness-consciousness and automatic activity.

At first the consciousness performs the work, and there is no automatic work - the previous automatic work was instinctual and reflex action, and hence defective. As this goes on, the consciousness extricates itself from the instruments - viz., mind, Prana and body, and stands aside as a witness - actively witnessing, allowing the instruments to perform their actions in its light. There then is spontaneous activity which is quite different from instinctual activity. It is perfect, pure and powerful.

Good or Bad

Nothing is good or bad; usage makes it so.

Walk on Unreal

Krishna danced on the hoods of Kaliya. Some accept it literally; others draw an esoteric lesson from it.

Jesus walked on water; maybe it was just a fact. Maybe, He wanted to teach us: "Walking on water is easy and sensible. But you are walking on nothing! Water is yet a substance. The hopes, aspirations, ambitions, wealth, power and relationships over which you are trying to march in your life - these do not exist at all. I wonder how you walk on these unreal shadows!"

Mahasivaratri

Parvathy once had an argument with Siva: "Is the world sustained by Siva or by Parvathy?" She closed Siva's eyes with Her hand. Immediately the whole creation was dissolved. The Eleven Rudras then prayed to Siva who in answer to their prayer created the universe again. That incident is commemorated in Mahasivaratri.

Motion

We live in illusion and love it. Any scientist will tell you that "motion" is just a rapid succession of scenes interpreted as motion by our mind. The eye cannot and does not see motion. Yet who does not believe that he sees a moving object?

Image-in

We use imagination in Yoga practice.

Imagine is image-in. We know what the external image is made of. But what is the image-in made of?

We create the image-in to help us gather the scattered rays of our consciousness. With the concentrated consciousness we then proceed to break that image-in so that the Reality of which it is an appearance may be realised.

Yoga and Psycho-analysis

There is this difference between Yoga and psycho-analysis. "We may take the help of a guru, a method, etc., but the "doing" is done by us. We do not lean too heavily on anything, anybody. We do not depend on any external agency.

Secondly - we do not bother too much about the subconscious or unconscious. We direct all our attention and energy on the conscious level, purifying and steadying it. When one layer is purified and steadied, the layer below becomes clear. Thus what the psychologist calls the unconscious becomes the focal point of our own consciousness.

Omnipresence

Though God does look after us in mysterious and miraculous ways, what is alluded to here is not some supernatural phenomenon, but an entirely simple and natural one. You see God in all, think on His Omnipresence and worship that Omnipresence through unselfish service of all - and He, the Indwelling Presence in all, will look after you, through them.

Difference?

My body is made of the vegetables I eat. The vegetables are the products of sun, air water and earth - which exist everywhere so to speak. One alone exists as elements, plants, humans and animals. Yet how come the difference?

The Fruit of Action

The "forbidden fruit" may be no more than "the fruit of action" in the meaning of the Bhagavad Gita. Man fell from divinity into humanity when he expected the fruits of actions.

Salvation is Inevitable

It is natural for water to flow down; it is inevitable that it should rise as vapour. If it is the nature of mind and senses to flow towards baser, animal tendencies, it is inevitable that that energy will one day be lifted up to higher centers of consciousness. If the fall of man is natural, the salvation of man is inevitable.

Ego

One need not even be anxious to be an instrument in God's Hands. In fact, everyone is an instrument in His hands; for, nothing but His Will is done in this world in any case. But our mission is to realise this truth. In order to do so, the only thing that is essential is to keep the ego out of the way. When the ego is out of the way, there is no anxiety even to do His will. It is done.

Hell or Heaven

People think it is easy to go to hell. If it is so very difficult to go to heaven, how can it be easy to go to hell? A lot of great good deeds are necessary to get a ticket to heaven: a lot of terribly wicked ones to go to hell. Otherwise, we shall keep coming back to the earth-plane.

Taxi-drivers

People who keep threatening "You will go to hell" must be taxi-drivers to Hell - they seem to be so sure, to be so familiar with the road to hell.

Virtue

Ahimsa, Satyam, etc. spring from Viveka which says: "It is easier to love than to kill, easier to be truthful than to lie - and worry about being found out." Virtue becomes natural.

Gratitude

Self-awareness and ultimate God-consciousness being the aim of Yoga, even Yoga Asanas can be pressed into its service. While doing the Asanas, cultivate a physical self-awareness. And, while becoming aware of the physical potentialities, offer the marvelous energy, flexibility and movement that each Asana involves as a flower of gratitude at the Feet of the Indweller.

Intuition

When the force gained by a physical-mental - moral-intellectual discipline destroys the logic-barrier within, intuition begins to flow.

One Answer

Do not ask "Why did I do it?" You may get a thousand consecutive answers which will confound you. But ask "Who did it"? At least there can be only one answer.