

Brother Santoshananda
Attunement with Christ Consciousness
Lake Shrine Temple
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In Self-Realization Fellowship [SRF], we want to attune ourselves more and more with the Christ within. It is called the Christ, the soul, the presence of God within. It's all the same although we may use different words. There are doors with which we can create this attunement. The door of the heart and the spiritual eye is where the Christ Consciousness resides. If we concentrate on these two doors – they are always with us all the time. We can bring our attention and focus on the heart center and the spiritual eye no matter where we are or where we go. It is possible to do if we create the habit of doing so... we will find direct interiorization, the awareness within. We become consciously aware of the presence this way.

Since we are celebrating Christmas, the birth of Jesus, and more importantly the message he is giving to each and every one of us, this morning's reading is from the Bible with the commentary by Paramahansa Yogananda. St. Matthew 5:14-16 is an interesting verse in which Jesus speaks in yogic language, an affirmation, as to who we really are. It is a very beautiful verse!

Jesus gave an example to his disciples saying: "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all who are in the house." When we light a candle, we want to have light; we don't hide the candle. And then Jesus connects what he is saying to each and everyone of us as to who we really are: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven."

All of us have an inner light within us. We have to become more and more aware of it -- to awaken it. We need to become more consciously aware of that divine light so that it can shine through in whatever we are doing. Whatever we do in every aspect of our lives, every little detail of our life, we can allow that light to flow, to manifest its presence in everything we do and to share with others, which is even more important in this world that we are living today.

Paramahansaji explained: "Awakened souls [Brother commented that yoga is a path of awakening] shine with the invisible light of God; they make invisible light visible in their hearts and actions. Thus illumined souls declare the presence of God and serve as spiritual beacons to lead stray brothers back to the Heavenly Father's mansion.

"God is hidden behind the walls of heaven; yet He comes out of His secret place only to enter the temples of illumined souls. It is the light of goodness in advanced souls that reveals and declares the glory of God."

We have that in the great ones, the saints and masters, who come in this world because God guides them to remind us of what the goal and the purpose of our lives are. They all come with a message and Jesus came with a message for us to apply in our everyday lives.

The message is beautiful! It is the light within us – the Christ within – it is not far away; it is close. “The kingdom of heaven is at hand,” Jesus said. This is why we meditate and that’s what we’re going to do this again morning. Every time we sit in meditation it is to awaken ourselves more and more and to realize that inner light within us, guiding us, which can be used to light our path in every aspect of our everyday lives. We have to be silent, calm and receptive to this inner light. The spiritual eye is where the light is. This is where we go and this why we teach that when we meditate -- practicing any technique whatever it may be -- to keep the attention at the spiritual eye -- the Christ center -- the light of God within us.

Brother went to say that he had been away for a while on a European tour – Paris, France, Zurich, Switzerland, Germany, in Bad Pyrmont, the northern part of German, giving lectures and initiation into *Kriya Yoga* and the message of Paramahansa Yogananda. That it was good to be back again. That is was rewarding to see the demands of so many wanting to change the consciousness and the atmosphere here in the world. Here in SRF we teach that when we change ourselves that’s when change happens and that’s basically what it’s all about.

When Brother was in Paris he gave all the classes and lectures in French and apologized if he slipped into using some French words.

The subject today, *Attunement with Christ Consciousness*, is a beautiful one! It is what most of you did yesterday if you came to the all-day Christmas meditation, a tradition that was created by Paramahansa Yogananda a long, long time ago. He was the first one to establish this special day of meditating on the Christ within. It is all about spending the day going deeper in our meditation.

When Paramahansa Yogananda came to this country in 1920, he arrived in Boston. He gave classes and lectures on yoga and meditation. During one of the classes someone came to him and asked: “You give classes on and teach how to meditate but are you a Christian?” And in a very humble way he answered: “Yes, I am. Whatever God asks me to do, I do. And I came, also, to teach the original teachings of Jesus.” He did not say “I believe” but to “teach the original teachings of Jesus” which is to realize the Christ within in meditation, his consciousness and our oneness with God. It is very simple, actually, to realize the Christ within and to realize our oneness with God. This is a path that you can practice and make disbelief into personal, actual realization. That is what it is all about; that is, to realize the light within us of Christ.

The first disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda was Dr. Lewis, who became the second vice-president in SRF, and when he heard Paramahansaji giving lectures on yoga, on meditation and the *Bhagavad Gita*, he suggested that Master give some classes on the Bible. He was an avid reader of the Bible, a strong Christian and he wanted to know more. He asked Paramahansaji: “You are teaching about the spiritual eye; how to meditate, to concentrate and to keep our attention focused on the spiritual eye. My question to you, Sir, is it the same light of which Jesus is speaking when he said: ‘If thy eye be single, they whole body shall be full of light?’”

Paramahansaji smiled but did not say a word. He put his hand on Dr. Lewis’s the spiritual eye and he saw that Divine Light right away. Paramahansaji said: “There is only one light and it is the Light of God which is within you.” “There is only one light of God,” nothing else. It may

manifests and expresses itself in different instruments or taught in different ways but essentially behind the appearances of life there is one light uniting everything in life.

So when we contact that light that we become baptized and born again into that Divine Light. This is why we are taught to meditate on the light in the spiritual eye and in this way it creates an awakening; we awaken ourselves. This is what the yoga path is all about...to create an awakening, which makes us realize who we truly are. We are made in the image of God.

As St. Paul said beautifully. He made a divine statement when he reminded us saying: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God [Brother commented that St. Paul here was speaking of the body] and the spirit of God dwelleth within you." Don't you know? Don't you know? Realize that! And the teachings are to make us realize that we are made in the image of God and this is His temple.

The German mystic, Meister Eckhart said so beautifully: "Between God and me there are no between." As Jesus said: "I and my Father are one." This is the goal of meditating, practicing yoga and attuning ourselves with the message of Jesus, which is essentially that goal -- to realize our oneness with God.

Also, he said something so beautiful expressing his mission here on earth: "I came so that you might have life, and live more abundantly." What did Jesus mean by "living more abundantly?"

He probably didn't mean more freeways and more shopping malls and all that. He didn't mean that at all. He meant to be aware that life is flowing to us, not actually, but fully according to our attunement that we have with his Christ Consciousness. He was connected with the Source and he tried to awaken us, to reconnect us with the Divine Source from which we've all come from. The goal of meditation is to become more and more aware of the Divine Source. That is why Jesus was able to heal and to awaken people because the power of God was flowing through him and healing people, awakening souls.

How did it happen? Before he was not able to do that because he was Jesus, the son of man. He was not the son of God in the beginning. He said: "I came to fulfill the law of the prophets and I was sent to John the Baptist. He went to John the Baptist and he was baptized with water. After Jesus walked out on a hill and saw the Divine Light descending upon him -- the Spirit of God descended upon him -- like a dove it is written in the Bible. And a Voice came out of heaven saying: "This is my son in whom I am well pleased."

First he was the son of Joseph, the son of man, and then he became the Son of God by receiving the Holy Spirit -- by connecting with the Divine Light. He was baptized, born again. This is what we are taught in SRF, that is, to be baptized, to be born again, in meditation, in that Divine Light. We read in the Bible in John where Jesus said: "...as many as received him to them gave he the power to become the sons of God."

So the principle is to open ourselves so that we can receive this Divine Light and make ourselves open and receptive to the Christ Consciousness and when we receive it we become sons and daughters of God. How? When we meditate and become still. The secret is to become still. "Be still and know that I am God," we read in the Bible and meditation is this process by which we

can go into the silence. When we are still, the presence is revealed to us. We have to be open and receptive to the *Aum* vibration and to the Christ Intelligence that is in the *Aum* vibration.

This is why, perhaps, when you meditate you feel peace or that something has changed. A change of consciousness is realized and you feel joy; you may feel love because you are no longer conditioned by the outer world. We begin to rely on something that is already within us. It is there; we just have to let go of the world. But we let the world take us away again and again so we have to meditate again and again to back to the right place within us. That's the yogic process.

When we feel the presence, we become more and more guided. Jesus said: "We can realize what all the Father has is mine." We realize that because we are made in the image of God. God will supply everything we need but, of course, not all the ego wants. That's the trick; the ego wants. He may not supply that but all that we really need He will provide, no matter what. Jesus said: "Never be of a doubtful mind." Don't doubt that God will provide.

Brother went on saying that he knows there are problems in the world but to do the best we can and rely on the Source, not the world, and then we will start to vibrate. We start to change the consciousness and there is an attraction, a frequency, within the body, mind and soul that starts to change and attracts the things that we need. We have to disregard our wants and then what we need does come because we are attuned to the divine process. We should not doubt; we should not step down to the level of the mind that doubts. The mind is full of the conflict of dualities because of incarnations of material thinking. We have been punishing ourselves by not relying on the Source but on the things we accomplish externally, neglecting our inner potential to be used and manifested in our daily lives.

This is why we meditate. Very often there are obstructions and we may be unconscious of the obstructions -- the fears and anxieties -- coming into our lives creating a barrier between God and us. So that's the path that we follow to liberate our souls from all its limitations.

And Jesus said: "For it is the Father's good pleasure to give to you according to your need." The special meditation yesterday was to renew our attunement with Christ Consciousness. But it has to be not just one day a year but throughout the year. Paramahansaji said something very beautiful after all-day a Christmas meditation. Keep these words in your heart. "After an all-day Christmas meditation for me my Christmas is not over...my Christmas is not over. It will go on forever," said he, "in ever increasing joy for it is everlasting." That is essentially Christmas -- to attune ourselves with that Divine Christ Consciousness...it is endless!

We feel freed from the limitations that we impose upon ourselves from the identification with the world. We reconnect with the inner spirit and realize more and more that the joy or the happiness we so desire in nowhere else but within us. To realize is what it is all about. It's a good sign when you know and when you feel that you are moving in the right direction and life is oriented in that direction. There may be obstructions and tribulations but as we renew our commitment in the New Year to become more and more focused and attuned to that divine Christ Consciousness, it will guide us according to our attunement.

Sometimes at Christmastime children write letters to God about what they want. Brother found a few to share. One child wrote: “Dear God, Is Santa Claus a friend of yours. If he is, can you tell him what I want for Christmas. I don’t think our mailman knows where he’s living. I love you, Johnny”

Holidays are times to send good will, love and good wishes to all. On the bulletin boards of a church was written: [Brother commented that he really liked this one] “Merry Christmas to our Christian friends, Happy Hanukkah to our Jewish friends, and to our atheistic friends, Good Luck! Something for everybody! Good luck! We want to have good luck...it doesn’t matter!

Another one of Brother’s favorites because it’s very sweet with a deep awakening and spiritual message in it: “Dear Jesus, Happy Birthday! I hope you have a nice Christmas. But I believe people should start to listen to you. Happy New Year, Jesus!” It’s a good wish for people to start listening to Jesus’ message, to what he’s saying to each one of us. How true is it!

How beautifully General Omar Bradley, of World War II, put it. He wrote: “Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the *Sermon on the Mount*.”

Brother went on to conclude with the beautiful words of Jesus on the *Sermon on the Mount*, called *The Beatitudes* in the Bible in which he was talking to his disciples and teaching them how to behave and how to have the right attitude in their every day lives when confronted with situations, circumstances and people. All the things we are humanly conditioned to relate and react to. He has left us spiritual values through his instructions on how to behave in order to free and attune ourselves to the Christ within and at the same time to liberate our souls, which is the goal of life...to find our oneness with God.

Brother asked each one to relax and listen to Jesus’ words that came directly from his union with God and for us to listen with our and hearts and souls; to close the eyes and absorb the meaning behind the words:

THE BEATITUDES

“And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him; and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

“You are the light of the world. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

“If you bring your gift to the altar and remember that there is a misunderstanding between you and your brother, leave your gift before the altar, and go and make peace with your brother and come offer your gift.

“You have heard it is said, ‘an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth’: But I say to you, you should not resist evil with evil: but when anyone hits you on the right check offer to him the left check also.

“If anyone should force you to go out with him a mile, go with him two miles.

“You have heard it said that you should love your neighbor and hate your enemies. But I say to you, love your enemies and bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate and betray you. And pray for them which use you and persecute you.

“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you.

“Therefore, whatever you would have men do unto you, do so unto them for this is the law of the prophets.

“Not everyone that says to me Lord, Lord shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven.

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you. Ask and it shall be given you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.

“Take therefore no thought for tomorrow for tomorrow shall take thought for the things of itself.

“Straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leads unto life and few there are that find it.

“If therefore thy eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light.

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

“And when you pray do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray where they can be seen by men. Verily, I say to you, they have their reward.

“But when you pray, enter into your room and close the door, and pray to your Father in secret, and your Father which sees in secret shall reward you openly.”

“And when you pray do so in this manner:

“Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

“Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, For ever.

Amen.”

This is, perhaps, something to remember in this coming New Year that we should attune ourselves more and more to his divine message, which God has sent us through Jesus, who became the Christ.

Brother wished everyone a Happy Holiday!