

Satsanga –Brother Saralananda

Wednesday August 6

SRF/YSS Convocation 2018

(DISCLAIMER: These notes are our best attempt to capture the essence of what was said at this class. There is always a degree of human error involved when taking notes and we have transcribed them to the best of our ability.)

Before I received your questions for satsanga, I inwardly prayed that they would all be easy to answer. (Laughter) The first question was, “Can you explain the Christ Consciousness so that I can understand what it feels like? The great ones tell us that it feels really, really, really, really, really good.” (Laughter) You may have noticed in your own life that God does not always answer our prayers. (Laughter) God has made it abundantly clear that I should have prayed for Christ Consciousness. (More laughter)

Our guru told us, “If at this moment, you could completely calm your emotions you would find Cosmic Consciousness.”

Most of the time, however, we find ourselves striving toward that but find it challenging to picture a state of complete calmness and repose in oneness . Because human reason has to rely upon the partial and often deceptive data supplied by the physical senses, we must learn to tap deeper and more subtle levels of awareness if we would solve the enigmas of life— Who am I? Why am I here? How do I realize Truth?

Yoga is a simple process of reversing the ordinary outward flow of energy and consciousness so that the mind becomes a dynamic center of direct perception— no longer dependent upon the fallible senses but capable of actually experiencing Truth.” That is the state of Christ Consciousness. “ In Samadhi, when the mind expands beyond the body into peace, that is experiencing Christ Consciousness.

In Discourse 71 of “The Second Coming of Christ,” Jesus promised his disciples that “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. “

That is, if their consciousness were perfectly in tune with the Christ Consciousness and Its emanations of Cosmic Vibration—they would be able to demonstrate untold wonders through operating the universal creative principle. Any devotee, of any era, who is in tune with Christ Consciousness materializes the glory and wisdom of Cosmic Consciousness (the Father) hidden in and beyond all creation. Those who would discipline their consciousness for expansion into Christ Consciousness—were considered by Jesus to be His real disciples.

“Then Jesus spoke to them precious words, none dearer to the devotee’s heart, that he loved them with the same divine, impartial, undying love with which the Heavenly Father loved him. Even as he felt God’s love within himself always, so would they abide always in God’s love flowing through Christ Consciousness if they continued to keep His commandments. What love could be purer; what love

could be greater than the love Jesus expresses here for his disciples. Human love requires human meriting and is subject to whims of feeling; but God's love is unconditional, eternal, unchanging.

Brother then led the group through the following visualization. "Try to imagine the love spoken of by Jesus in these verses. Close your eyes, put your attention on the heart, and feel the greatest love that you have ever felt for another person. Let that love saturate every cell of your body. Now, expand the feeling of love, like an encircling sphere embracing your family, friends, all your loved ones. Feel your love ever increasing; include in that sphere all the people in your city, than all of your country. Now everything in the world is bathed in that love. The whole earth, the solar system, the far-flung galaxies and island universes—everything is floating in this vast sphere of love. Feel it. Meditate on this. Merge yourself in that love which permeates and upholds the infinitudes of manifestation—a demonstrable presence of God's heartbeat of bliss, setting the pace of cosmic harmony and unity, and known to the devotee as the All-in-all fulfillment.

"The love felt in the heart at the beginning of this visualization is human love. And the love that expanded until it encompassed everything is the universal love of Christ, the infinite love of God. The love that most persons feel for dearest family and friends, Jesus felt for the world and every human being. The Christ Consciousness that encompasses everything in its love was born in the body of Jesus, in the body of Krishna, the body of Buddha."* ("Second Coming of Christ" pp 1397-1398)

Guruji has come into our lives so that we might one day experience this vast state of Christ Consciousness for ourselves. We also accomplish this expansiveness the social way, by learning to "love thy neighbors as thyself." Start with your friends and neighbors, and eventually you will feel this love for all.

He has given you certain family members whom you are serving. God's consciousness has begun to express itself through your consciousness whenever you do something for someone without any thought of yourself. When that happens, you are expanding into the sphere of Christ Consciousness.

One man talked with me about how different life was with his wife once they were married. He cited hundreds of differences: "I like black olives. She hates them. I like the house cool. She keeps the furnace blaring. She's an early bird. In the morning, she pops out of bed like a piece of toast. When I get up, it's like my pajamas were nailed to the bed. My feeling is, if God had meant for man to see the sunset, he would have scheduled it later."

There is no disagreement, no matter how small, that cannot grow into a major argument. Too often in communications we fail to realize that two monologues do not equal a dialogue. If our task was to create a new universe that we would inhabit together, we would be given many opportunities to stretch our understanding.

Question 2: Does one need to realize and incorporate into life each lesson in the SRF lessons before one goes on to the next lesson? The Lessons keep on coming. I can't keep up with following everything.

There is so much he gives me, and I can't keep up with it all. This makes me feel stressed out and inadequate.

Master did not require that we practice and incorporate everything before going on to the next lesson. If we had to practice everything in the lesson, we would have to hire some staff and delegate to them. For example, in the lesson about getting along with your relatives, could you take an international flight? I'll give you the names and addresses of those who are hard to get along with. We cannot delegate all of our spiritual duties to others.

Remember that Master said, "If you practice just one millionth of what I teach you in these Sunday night meetings, you will reach God. "

Mrinalini Mata writes in the Fall 2016 issue of the SRF Magazine, in an article called, "The Science of Spiritual Study: The Art of Introspection" about how Master wants us to study his teachings. Each day, I would take one thought from the teachings, and I will reflect upon this. Repeat it to yourself. Then analyze your actions and ask, "Am I manifesting this?" Then keep with the thought for a few days. When the next lesson arrives, move on and practice that lesson. In the same way of study, we keep coming back to these core principles.

Question 3: What should I do when I have only a few minutes to meditate? Do I practice part of the techniques, practice silence, or talk to the guru?

This is a very personal question. Each of us needs to decide what to do. You could practice the techniques for a minute or so but inwardly repeat a devotional thought. Practice a visualization or an affirmation. Pray for others. We can also practice our gratitude for God and guru.

Daya Mata said, "Inwardly, I call to God, My love, my love" Churn the ether with some devotional thought and repeat inwardly over and over while we wait for a response with God.

Daya Mata explained, "Most people give up because they have the notion that God is not responding, but in His own way, He is. One of the problems is that we forget to listen. Listening is part of the conversation with God."

Master prayed, "O Father! Show me the highway that leads to Thee. Give me bursting aspirations of the heart."

After devotion, we can be still and listen for God's reply. Keep the attention at the heart center. Wait for a response. Call again and again and go back into inner stillness and wait again. Churn the ethers with devotional thought, and after that we have a time of stillness where we wait for God's response

Master received countless demonstrations of Sri Yukteswar's love for him, but only on the first day when they met did he say, "I love you. " He expressed his love through countless actions, continuous silent blessing. He had a very serious, devotional nature. Master went to his guru with a personal desire. "Guruji, I know you love me, but my mortal ears long to hear these words," he pleaded.

Sri Yukteswar responded, "Yogananda, I love you always."

Master said to him, "Your answer is my passport to heaven."

Brother Saralananda shared the following story. At the end of my meditations, I would ask Master, "Do you love Me?", and I asked it over and over again. Then I thought, "You're asking Master a question. Why don't you ask that question and then be still and wait for an answer. When he didn't answer, I would count how long I waited and then would ask and wait. For five minutes I would go back and forth in this way and over the next months my heartfelt aspirations to get an answer to that question were deepening. One evening, I asked again and went into inner stillness. A subtle vibration of love passed through my heart. Again and again, I felt the same subtle response.

"In the echo of devotion, teach me to hear Thy voice. " Master had been answering me all the time, I just had never been still enough to hear his response. "

We can say anything we want to God. "My love, my love, my love!" and churn the ethers, and let that inspiration dictate how many times of churning the ether and stillness.

Master told us, "He is silent in the beginning, but if you are persistent, he will reply. I can see that some of you are nearing the place where he is about to whisper to you." Find something that's natural for you.

Question3: The ministers tell us to go into the inner stillness after the techniques. How do I do this?

In "The Autobiography of a Yogi", there is a footnote that states, "The goal of the science of yoga is to obtain that necessary inner stillness by which we can know God, so that in inner quietness of soul intuition can awaken and we can have a direct personal experience of God. "

We need to perform interiorizing actions. We act to attain inaction of the body and restless mind. First we need to interiorize. Then we pray. But after the techniques, when we go to sit in the stillness, we must remember that stillness and surrender are vital. Just center into this stillness and sit there. Here there is no restlessness, no searching or striving there. Come into the silence of solitude and the vibration will take you into the silence of God, and you will know that the visible has become invisible.

It is recommended that we sit in the silence for a minimum of ten minutes. It's something that we need to practice.

Master often compared the mind to a glass of muddy water. After a little while, the mud particles settle to the bottom of the glass. If a person does not stir up the water, the mud will not rise again to the surface. He advises the devotee to patiently await His coming. Just concentrate at the Christ center and let the attention rest there.

What happens when we're focused on the Christ Center? When the list of our shopping needs, groceries and so forth float by, and we think, "I need to buy laundry detergent."

Then comes a memory thought. Your wife said that there was something really important that you needed to get at the store, and you'll be in trouble if you don't get it. Pretty soon, your consciousness is filled with mud. So if we notice this, usually the gaze has dropped and we need to put our concentration at the Christ Center, and then we wait.

It takes tremendous patience to do this. Blessed are those who keep striving to get to that inner stillness by which we can know God.

Master said, "Learn to be still in body and mind, for when the motion ceases, when the normal sense thoughts are banished and we are in an interior state of calm consciousness, divine consciousness. To commune with God, we need to go into silence. There is a vital point of meditation that is often misunderstood.

Question 4: Even when regularly practicing Master's teachings, I still feel new on the path. What happened? How can I deal with these feeling of discouragement?

When we first come on this path, God and guru stimulate us. God and guru awaken us to the sweetness that can be experienced in Divine Communion. This is the honeymoon stage, and remember that honeymoons don't last forever. Then the work begins. Gradually we replace our materialist tendencies with spiritual tendencies. Master wrote to Gyanamata, "You would be amazed. Sometimes it requires a long time to get results. But the joy of realization, when it does come, is worth it."

Our guru had no compulsion to come back to this world. At the request of Divine Mother he incarnated again. He did this so that his life could become a living scripture for his disciples. Master took on a great deal to get acclimated when he came back to the physical body. He wrote, "As often as the mind tries to trick me into abandoning the meditation, I will trick the mind. I say, 'No matter what comes, I will keep on to the end.'"

This is the thought we must strengthen in our consciousness so it becomes part of our DNA. When tremendous struggles come, maya will plant discouraging, sad thoughts in the mind. Instead of planting those seeds. Plant positive seeds. "God will come to me! He will come!

"WHEN WILL HE COME?"

When every heart's desire pales

Before the brilliancy of the ever-leaping flames

of God-love,

Then He will come.

When, in expectation of His coming,

You are ever ready
To fearlessly, grieflessly, joyously
Burn the faggots of all desires
In the fireplace of life,
That you may protect Him from your freezing
inner indifference,
Then He will come.

When no inclinations or unfulfilled cravings can be sure of your stability toward them:
When He shall be certain you will never leave the guru,
Then He will come.

No matter how you feel-- helpless, forsaken,
Tortured by temptation, karma or tests--
If you ever keep hoping He will come,
He will come.

When your mind says piercingly,
When you think to have Him,
You don't deserve having Him;
Still, if your soul, disregarding all this,
Shall ever keep chanting within,
He will come,
He will come.
When He shall be sure nothing else can claim you,

Then He will come.

Even if you are the sinner of sinners,

Still, if you never stop calling Him deeply

In the temple of unceasing love,

Then He will come.

“Songs of the Soul” Paramahansa Yogananda

I read an inspiring story. One day, a very brave woman, Florence Chadwick, entered the water to swim the Catalina Coast. The water was very cold. There was a blanket of fog. Her coach and family were in a little boat that followed her. She swam for one hour, then two, three... ten, 12, 14. She looked up and there was still fog. She didn't know where she was. She couldn't tell how much progress she had made. After 15 hours of swimming, she gave up. The fog was so thick. Actually, she was only a half a mile from the shore, and that's when she quit.

She told reporters, “If I'd know how close I was, I wouldn't have quit, but all I could see was the fog.” Two months later she decided to attempt the swim again. She became the first woman to swim the channel and broke the men's record.

Master reminds us, “I will keep on until the end. In our own lives the fog of maya tells us that we are lost, and that we'll never make it. The truth is we are very near the heavenly shore. Our final freedom is at hand if we keep on trying. Say to yourself, “I will keep on until the end. We don't come to the kriya path at the beginning of the path, but at the end. We should never underestimate the power of our guru. We need to keep on swimming; keep on trying.”

Master told us that it is necessary to observe Divine Laws. He tells us, “Blessed are those who continue to follow Self Realization to the end of life. “

He also told us, “It is not Jesus and a few others who alone know God,. If you make the right kind of effort, you will find God.”