

# MAN'S ETERNAL QUEST

COLLECTED TALKS AND ESSAYS ON  
REALIZING GOD IN DAILY LIFE,  
VOLUME I

BY  
SRI SRI PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



*Yogoda Satsanga Society of India*

FOUNDED 1917

*Paramahansa Yogananda*

# CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i> . . . . .	xvii
<i>Introduction</i> . . . . .	xxi
<b>How Seekers First Found God</b> . . . . .	<b>3</b>
<i>Three Aspects of Nature</i> . . . . .	3
<i>A Story About Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva</i> . . . . .	4
<i>God, the Supreme Cause</i> . . . . .	5
<i>Evidence of Order and Harmony Is Everywhere</i> . . . . .	5
<i>Devotion and Right Activity Attract God's Attention</i> . . . . .	6
<i>Meditation Is the Highest Form of Activity</i> . . . . .	7
<i>The Self Is Your Saviour</i> . . . . .	9
<i>Reason Gives Man the Power to Seek God</i> . . . . .	9
<i>The Two Paths: Activity and Meditation</i> . . . . .	11
<i>Skyfuls of Eternal Bliss Will Be Opened</i> . . . . .	11
<b>The Universality of Yoga</b> . . . . .	<b>13</b>
<i>The Blind Cannot Lead the Blind</i> . . . . .	14
<i>Yoga Converts Theology to Practical Experience</i> . . . . .	16
<i>The Soul Must Reascend to God</i> . . . . .	17
<i>Secret of Happiness Is Consciousness of God's Presence</i> . . . . .	18
<i>Meditation Makes the Yogi</i> . . . . .	19
<b>The Infinite Nature of God</b> . . . . .	<b>21</b>
<i>We Have Descended From the Infinite Into the Finite</i> . . . . .	22
<i>God's True Nature Known Only Through Intuition</i> . . . . .	23
<i>Satan Created Ignorance, Cause of All Suffering</i> . . . . .	24
<i>Meditation Lifts the Fog of Ignorance</i> . . . . .	26
<i>Give God First Place in Your Heart</i> . . . . .	28
<i>Awake From the Nightmare of Suffering</i> . . . . .	29
<i>In Oneness With God Know That Life Is a Dream</i> . . . . .	30
<b>Answered Prayers</b> . . . . .	<b>32</b>
<i>Prayer Is a Demand of the Soul</i> . . . . .	33
<i>In Will Power Lies the Germ of Success</i> . . . . .	34
<i>Cauterize the "Cant's" in Your Brain</i> . . . . .	35
<i>Seek the Company of Those Who Strengthen Your Faith</i> . . . . .	36
<i>Assure Your Ultimate Arrival in Heaven</i> . . . . .	37
<i>Surcharge Your Will Power Through Concentration</i> . . . . .	39
<i>Who Will Persist Until God Answers?</i> . . . . .	40

<i>Your Greatest Necessity Is God</i> . . . . .	41
<i>Follow the Rules of Prayer</i> . . . . .	42
<b>Making Religion Scientific</b> . . . . .	<b>44</b>
<i>God Is Waiting for Your Invitation</i> . . . . .	45
<i>Creation Is Meant to Disillusion You</i> . . . . .	46
<i>Seek a Definite Understanding of Truth</i> . . . . .	47
<i>By Yoga, Religion Can Be Made Scientific</i> . . . . .	48
<i>Satan Makes Us Think God Is Unattainable</i> . . . . .	50
<i>Meditation Is the True Practice of Religion</i> . . . . .	51
<i>Meditation Provides the Proof of God's Existence</i> . . . . .	52
<i>Intensity, Secrecy, Devotion, and Constancy Are Necessary</i> . .	53
<b>Understanding the Unreality of Matter</b> . . . . .	<b>55</b>
<i>The Chemical Elements of Matter Are Electronic Vibrations</i> .	56
<i>The Universe Is God's Dream</i> . . . . .	58
<b>Man's Greatest Adventure</b> . . . . .	<b>60</b>
<i>The Origin and Power of Memory</i> . . . . .	61
<i>Creation—Dual Adventure of God and Man</i> . . . . .	62
<i>Prenatal Consciousness</i> . . . . .	64
<i>The Breath of Life</i> . . . . .	65
<i>Man Should Befriend Himself</i> . . . . .	66
<i>The Subtle Enemies</i> . . . . .	67
<i>Prepare for Every Kind of Battle</i> . . . . .	68
<i>The Importance of Mind Power</i> . . . . .	68
<i>The Ultimate Protection is God-Communion</i> . . . . .	69
<i>The Goal of Our Life-Adventure</i> . . . . .	71
<b>Self-Analysis: Key to the Mastery of Life</b> . . . . .	<b>73</b>
<i>Without Self-Analysis, Man Leads Robotlike Life</i> . . . . .	73
<i>Traits From Past Lives Influence Us Now</i> . . . . .	74
<i>Whatever You Have Done, You Can Undo</i> . . . . .	74
<i>Thought Produces Everything in the Universe</i> . . . . .	75
<i>Dreams Reveal the Omnipotence of Mind</i> . . . . .	76
<i>Change Your Mental Attitude</i> . . . . .	77
<i>The Conditions of Happiness: Plain Living, High Thinking</i> . .	78
<i>Seclusion Is the Price of Greatness</i> . . . . .	79
<b>Healing by God's Unlimited Power</b> . . . . .	<b>81</b>
<i>Balanced Development Is Essential</i> . . . . .	82
<i>Obey Nature's Laws and Have More Faith in God</i> . . . . .	83

<i>Fruits, Vegetables, and Nuts Superior to Meat . . . . .</i>	84
<i>Purify the Body of Harmful Toxins . . . . .</i>	85
<i>Increase Your Natural Resistance to Disease . . . . .</i>	86
<i>You Can Increase Your Life Span . . . . .</i>	88
<i>The Power of a Smile . . . . .</i>	88
<i>Permanent Healing Comes From God. . . . .</i>	89
<b>Eliminating the Static of Fear From the Mind Radio . . . . .</b>	<b>91</b>
<i>The World is Only a Thought in the Mind of God. . . . .</i>	92
<i>Fear Cannot Enter a Quiet Heart. . . . .</i>	93
<i>Be Cautious But Not Fearful . . . . .</i>	94
<i>Technique of Tuning Out Fear . . . . .</i>	95
<i>Fear Ceases With the Contact of God. . . . .</i>	95
<i>A Single Thought May Lead to Redemption. . . . .</i>	96
<b>Nervousness—Cause and Cure . . . . .</b>	<b>98</b>
<i>Far-Reaching Effects of Nervousness . . . . .</i>	98
<i>The Nervous System . . . . .</i>	99
<i>Overcome Nervousness by Good Company . . . . .</i>	100
<i>Calmness Is the Best Cure . . . . .</i>	101
<b>The Physical and Spiritual Rewards of Fasting . . . . .</b>	<b>102</b>
<i>Self-Control—The Sanest Way to Health and Happiness . . . . .</i>	104
<i>Know the Right Way to Fast. . . . .</i>	105
<i>Function Well Under All Circumstances . . . . .</i>	106
<i>The Metaphysical Science Behind Fasting . . . . .</i>	106
<b>Self-realization: Criterion of Religion . . . . .</b>	<b>108</b>
<i>Spiritual Development Must Balance Material Advancement. . . . .</i>	110
<i>My Only Wish Is to Give You a Glimpse of God . . . . .</i>	111
<i>It Is Necessary to Understand the Meaning of Religion . . . . .</i>	112
<i>True Religion Satisfies the Demands of Your Soul. . . . .</i>	113
<i>Whatever Religion You Choose, Give It a Good Test. . . . .</i>	114
<i>Realizing God Requires Self-Disciplinatory Effort. . . . .</i>	115
<i>All Churches Should Be Hives of God-Communion . . . . .</i>	116
<i>Scientific Method Needed to Follow the First Commandment . . . . .</i>	117
<i>Self-realization Converts Conviction Into Experience . . . . .</i>	119
<i>Practice Truth—Meditate—for God-Communion . . . . .</i>	120
<b>The Desire That Satisfies All Desires . . . . .</b>	<b>121</b>
<i>God's Children Should Not Beg. . . . .</i>	122
<i>The Danger of Unfulfilled Desires. . . . .</i>	123

<i>Love Thine Enemies</i> . . . . .	124
<i>Conscience Will Tell You What You Are</i> . . . . .	125
<i>Man's Lost Treasure Is God</i> . . . . .	125
<i>Take God, Not Life, Seriously</i> . . . . .	126
<i>Environment Shapes Our Desires</i> . . . . .	128
<i>Be Safe in the Castle of God's Presence</i> . . . . .	129
<i>Carry a Portable Heaven Within</i> . . . . .	131
<b>In God Is All Happiness</b> . . . . .	<b>133</b>
<i>God Must Come to Those Who Truly Want Him</i> . . . . .	134
<i>Seek God in Solitude</i> . . . . .	136
<i>Look to God Alone</i> . . . . .	137
<b>How to Be More Likable</b> . . . . .	<b>139</b>
<i>Attractiveness Comes From Within</i> . . . . .	140
<i>You Are Judged Largely by the Way You Conduct Yourself</i> . . . . .	141
<i>When With Others, Be Sincere and Thoughtful</i> . . . . .	142
<i>Live for Others and They Will Live for You</i> . . . . .	143
<i>Perfect Balance Is the Altar of God</i> . . . . .	145
<i>Seek God, and Be Victorious in Life</i> . . . . .	146
<b>Developing Personality</b> . . . . .	<b>149</b>
<i>Intuition Develops One's True Personality</i> . . . . .	151
<i>Man Can Be Whatever He Wants to Be</i> . . . . .	152
<i>Never Forget Your True Nature!</i> . . . . .	153
<i>Awaken Your Divine Personality</i> . . . . .	154
<b>The Divine Art of Making Friends</b> . . . . .	<b>155</b>
<i>Develop Friendship From the Past</i> . . . . .	156
<i>To Attract Friends, Improve Your Character</i> . . . . .	156
<i>Give Friendship to All, As God Does</i> . . . . .	157
<i>Universal Friendship Starts at Home</i> . . . . .	158
<b>The True Experience of Spiritual Ecstasy</b> . . . . .	<b>160</b>
<i>The Wine of Spiritual Ecstasy Is Incomparable</i> . . . . .	161
<i>Consciousness Has a Limitless Span</i> . . . . .	162
<i>What Is the Proof of Self-realization?</i> . . . . .	162
<i>Beyond the Kaleidoscope of Subconsciousness</i> . . . . .	163
<b>Three Paths to Cosmic Consciousness</b> . . . . .	<b>165</b>
<i>Concentration—A Requisite for Finding God</i> . . . . .	166
<i>The Invisible Source of Visible Worlds</i> . . . . .	167

<i>The First Path to Cosmic Consciousness</i> . . . . .	169
<i>The Second Path</i> . . . . .	170
<i>The Third and Highest Path</i> . . . . .	170
<b>Be a Smile Millionaire</b> . . . . .	<b>172</b>
<i>Beyond Peace Is Bliss</i> . . . . .	172
<i>Smile With the Love of God</i> . . . . .	173
<i>To Find Bliss, Meditate</i> . . . . .	174
<i>How to Banish External Impressions</i> . . . . .	176
<i>The Motion Picture of Creation</i> . . . . .	177
<i>Don't Question God—Love Him</i> . . . . .	178
<b>Lord, Possess Us With Thy Love</b> . . . . .	<b>180</b>
<i>God Is the Lover Behind All Love</i> . . . . .	181
<i>Don't Waste Time</i> . . . . .	182
<i>Call God Your Own</i> . . . . .	183
<b>Controlling Your New Year's Destiny</b> . . . . .	<b>184</b>
<i>Reclaim Your Lost Divinity</i> . . . . .	185
<i>Apply Will and Discrimination to Resolution</i> . . . . .	186
<i>Are You a Psychological Antique?</i> . . . . .	188
<i>A Stream of Divine Power</i> . . . . .	189
<i>The Best Resolution—Give More Time to God</i> . . . . .	191
<b>How to Outwit Temptation</b> . . . . .	<b>192</b>
<i>Why Sense Experiences Are Alluring</i> . . . . .	193
<i>Habit Is a Pitiless Dictator</i> . . . . .	193
<i>Wisdom Is Man's Best Protection</i> . . . . .	194
<i>Even If You Are the Greatest Sinner, Forget It</i> . . . . .	196
<i>Fix Your Mind in the Divine Consciousness of Meditation</i> . . . . .	197
<b>Curing Mental Alcoholics</b> . . . . .	<b>199</b>
<i>A False Conception</i> . . . . .	200
<i>Counteractive Influences</i> . . . . .	200
<i>Petty Dictators</i> . . . . .	201
<b>Overcoming Malignant Moods</b> . . . . .	<b>203</b>
<i>We Live in a Glass House</i> . . . . .	203
<i>Moods Get Their Grip on a Vacant Mind</i> . . . . .	205
<i>Moods Are the Brakes on Your Wheels of Progress</i> . . . . .	206
<i>Magical Effect of Sincere Love</i> . . . . .	207
<i>Live in a World of Wonder</i> . . . . .	208

<i>Fear Enters When God Is Shut Out of Life . . . . .</i>	209
<b>Reincarnation Can Be Scientifically Proven . . . . .</b>	<b>211</b>
<i>Scientific Law . . . . .</i>	211
<i>How Were the Spiritual Laws Discovered? . . . . .</i>	212
<i>Relaxation in Sleep . . . . .</i>	213
<i>Current Withdrawn. . . . .</i>	213
<i>An Amazing Case . . . . .</i>	214
<i>Follow the Practices . . . . .</i>	215
<b>Reincarnation: The Soul's Journey to Perfection . . . . .</b>	<b>216</b>
<i>The Importance of Time . . . . .</i>	217
<i>How We Live This Life Determines What We Are in the Next . . . . .</i>	219
<i>Analyze Yourself to See How You Should Change . . . . .</i>	221
<i>Discern Between Inner Worth and Outer Position. . . . .</i>	222
<i>Exchange of Souls Between East and West . . . . .</i>	223
<i>Past Associations Influence Present Affinities . . . . .</i>	225
<i>A Pure Heart – A Clear Insight . . . . .</i>	226
<i>We Must Perfect Love in at Least One Relationship . . . . .</i>	227
<b>Will Jesus Reincarnate Again? . . . . .</b>	<b>229</b>
<i>Divine Justice and the Law of Reincarnation. . . . .</i>	230
<i>Jesus Was Eliseus in His Former Life. . . . .</i>	231
<i>Christ Comes in Vision and in the Flesh to His Devotees. . . . .</i>	232
<i>All Great Avatars Will Come Again . . . . .</i>	234
<b>The Dream Nature of the World . . . . .</b>	<b>237</b>
<i>Matter Originates in Thought . . . . .</i>	238
<i>Pride Is the Greatest Barrier to Wisdom. . . . .</i>	240
<i>Dissociate Yourself From Your Experiences. . . . .</i>	241
<i>Concentrate First on God. . . . .</i>	243
<b>God's Nature in the Mother and the Father . . . . .</b>	<b>246</b>
<i>PART ONE: THE MOTHER . . . . .</i>	246
<i>PART TWO: THE FATHER. . . . .</i>	248
<i>Example Is the Best Teacher. . . . .</i>	249
<b>Looking at Creation With Seeing Eyes. . . . .</b>	<b>251</b>
<i>The Limitations of the Physical Senses. . . . .</i>	253
<i>The Infinite Potential of Thought . . . . .</i>	255
<i>In God-Consciousness Everything Becomes Beautiful. . . . .</i>	256
<i>This World Is a Temporal Place . . . . .</i>	257

<i>Seek the Lord Who Is Hiding Behind Creation. . . . .</i>	258
<b>The Invisible Man . . . . .</b>	<b>261</b>
<i>Investigate the Electricity That Lights the Body Bulb. . . . .</i>	262
<i>Man's Body Is Composed of 35 Thoughts of God. . . . .</i>	263
<i>The Invisible Man Is Free From Suffering and Death . . . . .</i>	265
<i>Everything Is the Result of an Idea . . . . .</i>	266
<i>Realize Your Immortality Now . . . . .</i>	267
<b>What Are Ghosts? . . . . .</b>	<b>269</b>
<i>The Triune Nature of Man . . . . .</i>	270
<i>At Death We Are Still Encased in the Astral and Causal Bodies . . . . .</i>	273
<i>The Intelligence in Prana Creates the Physical Body . . . . .</i>	274
<i>Death Should Not Be Feared . . . . .</i>	275
<i>It Is Possible to Enter and Leave the Body Consciously . . . . .</i>	277
<i>The Power of Black Magic Is in Your Thought . . . . .</i>	279
<i>The Cosmic War of Good and Evil . . . . .</i>	279
<i>The Temptation of Adam and Eve. . . . .</i>	281
<i>Listen Only to the Voice of God . . . . .</i>	282
<b>Jesus: A Christ of East and West . . . . .</b>	<b>283</b>
<i>The True Nature of the Star of the East. . . . .</i>	285
<i>Train Your Heart to Feel the Brotherhood of Man . . . . .</i>	288
<i>God Does Not Like to Be Forgotten. . . . .</i>	290
<i>A Vision of Christ at the Yogoda School in India. . . . .</i>	291
<i>Truth Is a Universal Experience. . . . .</i>	292
<b>Christ and Krishna: Avatars of the One Truth . . . . .</b>	<b>294</b>
<i>The Universal Consciousness. . . . .</i>	297
<i>Concepts of God and Trinity Agree . . . . .</i>	299
<i>The Pitfalls of Body Consciousness . . . . .</i>	301
<i>Significance of Krishna's Life for Modern Man. . . . .</i>	302
<i>Moral Doctrines Universal in the Scriptures . . . . .</i>	304
<i>Reincarnation in the Gita and the Bible. . . . .</i>	305
<i>Christ Born an Oriental to Unite East and West . . . . .</i>	306
<i>A Vision of Christ and Krishna . . . . .</i>	307
<b>The Ten Commandments: Eternal Rules of Happiness . . . . .</b>	<b>308</b>
<i>The Ten Eternal Rules of Happiness . . . . .</i>	309
<b>How to Read Character. . . . .</b>	<b>317</b>
<i>Physical Appearance an Index of Character. . . . .</i>	318

<i>Emotions as a Clue to Character</i> . . . . .	319
<i>Evenmindedness, a Key to Development</i> . . . . .	320
<i>Animal Characteristics in Man</i> . . . . .	321
<i>Intuition Is the Surest Judge of Character</i> . . . . .	323
<b>How to Be Happy at Will</b> . . . . .	<b>324</b>
<i>Basis of Reactions</i> . . . . .	324
<i>Negative and Positive Peace</i> . . . . .	325
<i>Drink Deep of Bliss</i> . . . . .	326
<b>Steps Toward the Universal Christ Consciousness</b> . . . . .	<b>328</b>
<i>Psychological Expansion of Consciousness</i> . . . . .	330
<i>Conscious, Subconscious, and Superconscious Memory</i> . . . . .	331
<i>Sympathy a Key to Christ Consciousness</i> . . . . .	332
<i>Metaphysical Way to Christ Consciousness</i> . . . . .	333
<i>The "Sons of God"</i> . . . . .	334
<b>Evenmindedness in a World of Change</b> . . . . .	<b>337</b>
<i>Pain Is Perceived Only in the Mind</i> . . . . .	338
<i>You Can Free Yourself From the Sensory Dictators</i> . . . . .	339
<i>Habits Begin to Form at Age Three</i> . . . . .	340
<i>Man's Life Is Totally Independent of the Body</i> . . . . .	342
<i>The Right Way to Look at Death</i> . . . . .	343
<i>Exude Peace and Goodness</i> . . . . .	344
<i>Good and Evil Are Created in the Mind</i> . . . . .	345
<i>When the Soul Commands, the Mind Obeys</i> . . . . .	346
<b>The Balanced Life (Curing Mental Abnormalities)</b> . . . . .	<b>347</b>
<i>Spiritual Melancholia</i> . . . . .	348
<i>Spiritual Indigestion</i> . . . . .	348
<i>Sowing Mental "Wild Oats"</i> . . . . .	348
<i>Mental Cold</i> . . . . .	349
<i>Mental Catarrh</i> . . . . .	349
<i>Psychological Fixation</i> . . . . .	349
<i>Religious Fixation</i> . . . . .	350
<i>Spiritual Principles Should Be Taught</i> . . . . .	350
<i>"How-to-Live" Schools Are Needed</i> . . . . .	351
<b>Increasing the Power of Initiative</b> . . . . .	<b>353</b>
<i>Don't Be a One-Horsepower Person</i> . . . . .	354
<i>You Must Discover the Power You Have</i> . . . . .	356
<i>The Lord's Infinite Power Sustains You</i> . . . . .	357

<i>God Meant the World for Our Entertainment</i> . . . . .	358
<b>Who Made God?</b> . . . . .	<b>360</b>
<i>Varying Perspective</i> . . . . .	361
<i>Spirit Is Free From Causation</i> . . . . .	362
<b>The Missing Link Between Consciousness and Matter</b> ..	<b>364</b>
<i>Difference Between Illusion And Delusion</i> . . . . .	364
<i>The Cosmic Magician's Grand Illusion</i> . . . . .	365
<i>How Consciousness Became Matter</i> . . . . .	366
<i>Wrong Thoughts Obstruct God's Perfect Thought-Pictures</i> ..	367
<i>Will, the Cosmic Energizer</i> . . . . .	369
<b>Is God a Father or a Mother?</b> . . . . .	<b>370</b>
<i>God Is Both Father and Mother</i> . . . . .	372
<i>Pure Reason and Pure Feeling Are Intuitive</i> . . . . .	374
<i>A Vision of Divine Mother</i> . . . . .	376
<i>A Test of Faith</i> . . . . .	377
<b>The Art of Developing Memory</b> . . . . .	<b>380</b>
<i>Develop divine Memory</i> . . . . .	381
<i>Effect of Physical Exercise on Memory</i> . . . . .	381
<i>Foods That Increase Memory Power</i> . . . . .	382
<i>Practice Exercising Memory</i> . . . . .	382
<i>Meditation Strengthens Memory</i> . . . . .	383
<i>Remember Good Experiences</i> . . . . .	384
<b>Man's Eternal Quest</b> . . . . .	<b>386</b>
<i>What Is a Successful Life?</i> . . . . .	387
<i>Happiness Is a Creation of Our Own Mind</i> . . . . .	387
<i>To Be Happy Under All Circumstances Is Real Success</i> . . . .	388
<i>Evolutionary Human Progress Lies in the Power of Thought</i> . .	389
<i>Receive Knowledge Directly From Spirit</i> . . . . .	390
<i>Man's Evolution Ordained by Cosmic Law</i> . . . . .	390
<i>God Fulfils Man's Eternal Quest</i> . . . . .	392
<i>Nature Veils God's Presence</i> . . . . .	392
<i>How to Discover Spirit</i> . . . . .	393
<i>Yoga Is the Science of Finding God</i> . . . . .	393
<i>Your Prayer Must Be Intense to Reach God</i> . . . . .	396
<i>Practice of Yoga Awakens Soul Longing</i> . . . . .	396
<i>This World Is Only Pictures of Light</i> . . . . .	397
<i>God Is Our Only True Goal</i> . . . . .	397

<b>The Art of Living</b> .....	<b>399</b>
<i>Practical Methods for Uniform Development</i> .....	400
<i>Be Calmly Active and Actively Calm</i> .....	402
<b>Habit—Your Master or Your Slave?</b> .....	<b>404</b>
<i>Are Habit Slaves Born or Made?</i> .....	405
<i>Impeach a Bad Habit-President and Install a Good One</i> ...	406
<i>It Takes Time to Establish Habits, Good or Bad</i> .....	407
<b>Creating and Destroying Habits at Will</b> .....	<b>410</b>
<i>Why Let Your Habits Dictate to You?</i> .....	413
<i>Be Guided by Wisdom, Not Convention</i> .....	414
<i>True Freedom Versus Whim Freedom</i> .....	415
<i>Fight Bad Habits With “Won’t” Power</i> .....	416
<i>Habits Are Mental Phonograph Records</i> .....	416
<i>Maintain Your Freedom as a Child of God</i> .....	417
<b>Developing Dynamic Will</b> .....	<b>420</b>
<i>Wisdom and Will Govern Body and Mind</i> .....	422
<i>Physiological Will—First Expression of Will Power</i> .....	423
<i>Without Wisdom, Will Becomes Habit-Bound</i> .....	424
<i>Stages of Will Development</i> .....	426
<i>The World Will Try to Trick You</i> .....	427
<i>In Your Will Power Lies the Image of God</i> .....	428
<i>Nothing Is Impossible When Will Becomes Dynamic</i> .....	429
<b>Seek God Now!</b> .....	<b>431</b>
<i>Perseverance Is the Whole Magic of Spiritual Success</i> .....	432
<i>Keep a Daily Appointment With God</i> .....	434
<i>Kriya Yoga – Highest Method of God-Contact</i> .....	435
<i>To Find God, Be Loyal to God</i> .....	436
<b>Why Waste Time? God Is the Joy You Seek</b> .....	<b>439</b>
<i>“My Words Shall Not Pass Away”</i> .....	439
<i>Life Is a Caravan</i> .....	440
<i>Good Company Is of Supreme Importance</i> .....	441
<i>Never Forget God</i> .....	441
<i>March on Toward the Lord’s Kingdom</i> .....	442
<i>Please Man by Pleasing God</i> .....	443
<i>Seek the Recognition of God</i> .....	445

<b>God as Light and Joy</b> . . . . .	<b>448</b>
<i>The Way to True Freedom</i> . . . . .	449
<i>With God-Realization Comes All Power</i> . . . . .	449
<i>God Speaks Only Through His Devotees</i> . . . . .	451
<i>God Is the Only Guru</i> . . . . .	452
<i>I Cried and Prayed, Day and Night</i> . . . . .	453
<i>Pray Only to Know God</i> . . . . .	454
<b>Have I Found God?</b> . . . . .	<b>455</b>
<b>The Purpose of Life Is to Find God</b> . . . . .	<b>457</b>
<i>To Ignore God Is Not Common Sense</i> . . . . .	458
<i>The Romance of Divine Love</i> . . . . .	461
<b>God! God! God! (poem)</b> . . . . .	<b>462</b>
<i>Paramahansa Yogananda: A Yogi in Life And Death</i> . . . . .	463
<i>Aims and Ideals of Yogoda Satsanga Society of India</i> . . . . .	464
<i>Additional Resources on the Kriya Yoga Teachings of</i> <i>Paramahansa Yogananda</i> . . . . .	469
<i>Yogoda Satsanga Lessons</i> . . . . .	470
<i>Glossary</i> . . . . .	471

# How Seekers First Found God

*Self-Realization Fellowship International Headquarters,  
Los Angeles, California, November 11, 1934*

We can readily understand how man first conceived of a science of medicine. He suffered physically and therefore sought a method to heal himself. But how did man happen to try to find out about God? The question gives scope for profound reflection.

In the Vedas\* of India we find the earliest true concept of God. In her scriptures India has given the world immortal truths that have stood the test of time.

Every material inventor is actuated by material need—“necessity is the mother of invention.” Similarly motivated by necessity, the early *rishis*† of India became ardent spiritual seekers. They had found that without inner satisfaction, no amount of external good fortune can bring lasting happiness. How then can one make himself really happy? That is the problem the wise men of India undertook to solve.

## Three Aspects of Nature

Worship of God in prehistoric times began through man's fear of the various forces of nature. When it rained excessively, floods killed many people. Awed, man thought of the rain and wind and other natural forces as gods.

Later on, human beings realized that nature operates in three ways: creative, preservative, and dissolutive. A wave

\* From the Sanskrit *vid*, “to know.” The Vedas comprise a voluminous scripture of 100,000 couplets. The origin of the Vedas is lost in antiquity. They were passed down orally for millenniums. According to tradition, the illumined sage Vyasa, who lived at the time of Bhagavan Krishna (see glossary), was the compiler and arranger of the Vedas in their present form: Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda, and Atharva Veda.

† Literally “seers.” The rishis were the inspired personages to whom the Vedas were revealed in an indeterminable antiquity.

rising out of the ocean exemplifies the creative state; staying for a moment on the sea-breast, it is in the preservative state; and sinking back into the deep, it passes through the dissolutive state.

Just as Jesus beheld the universal force of evil personified in Satan, so the great *rishis* beheld the universal forces of creation, preservation, and dissolution personified in definite forms. The sages of old named them Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Shiva the Destroyer. These primal powers were created as projections of the unmanifested Spirit to unfold His infinite drama of creation, while He, as God beyond creation, remains ever hidden behind their consciousness. In times of cosmic dissolution, all creation and its vast activating forces dissolve back into Spirit. There they rest until called upon again by the Great Director to reenact their roles.\*

### A Story About Brahma, Vishnu, And Shiva

In India there is a popular story about Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. They were boasting among themselves about their tremendous might. Suddenly a little boy came up and said to Brahma, "What do you create?" "Everything," Brahma replied grandly. The boy asked the other two gods what their work was. "We preserve and destroy everything," they answered.

The young visitor was holding in his hand a single piece of straw about the size of a toothpick. Placing it in front of Brahma, he asked, "Can you create a piece of straw like this?" After prodigious effort, Brahma found to his astonishment that he could not. The lad then turned to Vishnu and asked him to save the straw, which was slowly starting to dissolve under the boy's steady gaze. Vishnu's efforts to hold it together were fruitless. Finally, the little stranger produced the piece of straw again and asked Shiva to destroy it. But try as Shiva would to annihilate it, the tiny straw remained intact.

The little boy turned again to Brahma: "Did you create

\* "They are true knowers...who understand the Day of Brahma, which endures for a thousand cycles (*yugas*), and the Night of Brahma, which also endures for a thousand cycles. At the dawn of Brahma's Day all creation, reborn, emerges from the state of non-manifestation; at the dusk of Brahma's Night all creation sinks into the sleep of non-manifestation" (Bhagavad Gita VIII: 17-18).

me?" he asked. Brahma thought and thought; he could not remember ever having created this amazing child. Suddenly the boy vanished. The three gods awoke from their delusion and remembered that behind their power is a Greater Power.

### **God, the Supreme Cause**

In the Western world the idea of God developed through observation of the law of cause and effect. Man can materialize objects by taking materials from the earth and shaping them in accordance with a preconceived idea; therefore it seemed reasonable to conclude that this whole universe must have been created out of ideas. This led to the concept that everything must have existed first as an idea. Someone had to create that first idea or cosmic plan. Thus through the analogy of the law of cause and effect, intelligent men reasoned that there must be a Supreme Cause.

Science has learned that all matter is made of invisible building blocks—electrons and protons—just as a house is built of bricks. But nobody can tell why some electrons and protons become wood, and others become human bone, and so on. What Intelligence guides them? This line of questioning gives room for God in even the material scientist's theories about the nature of the phenomenal worlds. The sages of India say that everything proceeds from and goes back into its source: God.

### **Evidence of Order and Harmony Is Everywhere**

Perceiving that every human being is a compound of matter and mind, the earliest Western thinkers believed that two independent forces existed: nature and mind. Later they began asking themselves, "Why is everything in nature arranged in a particular way? Why isn't one of man's arms longer than the other? Why don't stars and planets collide? Everywhere we see evidence of order and harmony in the universe." They concluded that mind and matter could not be both separate and sovereign; a single Intelligence must govern all. This conclusion naturally led to the idea that there is just one God, who is both the Cause of matter and the Intelligence within and behind it. One who attains the ultimate wisdom realizes that everything is Spirit—in essence, though hidden in manifesta-

tion. If you had the perception, you would see God in everything. Then the question is, how did seekers first find Him?

As the beginning step, they closed their eyes to shut out immediate contact with the world and matter, so they could concentrate more fully on discovering the Intelligence behind it. They reasoned that they could not behold God's presence in nature through the ordinary perceptions of the five senses. So they began to try to feel Him within themselves by deeper and deeper concentration. They eventually discovered how to shut off all five senses, thus temporarily doing away entirely with the consciousness of matter. The inner world of the Spirit began to open up.\* To those great ones of ancient India who undeviatingly persisted in these inner investigations, God finally revealed Himself.

### **Devotion and Right Activity Attract God's Attention**

Thus the saints gradually began to convert their conceptions of God into perceptions of Him. That is what you must do also, if you would know Him. You don't stay long enough at your prayers. First you must have a right concept of God—a definite idea through which you can form a relationship with Him—and then you must meditate† and pray until that mental conception becomes changed into actual perception. Then you will know Him. If you persist, the Lord will come. The Searcher of Hearts wants only your sincere love. He is like a little child: someone may offer Him his whole wealth and He doesn't want it; and another cries to Him, "O Lord, I love You!" and into that devotee's heart He comes running.

Don't seek God with any ulterior motive, but pray to Him with devotion—unconditional, one-pointed, steady devotion. When your love for Him is as great as your attachment to your mortal body, He will come to you.

In seeking the Lord, activity comes after devotion in importance. Some say, "God is Power; therefore let us act with

\* "...for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (*Luke 17:21*, Bible).

† Meditation is that special form of concentration in which the attention has been liberated, by scientific yoga techniques, from the restlessness of the body-conscious state and is focused unflinchingly on God. Meditation is the concentrated flow of one's attention and consciousness toward communion and oneness with God.

power." When you are active in doing good, with the Lord ever uppermost in your mind, you will perceive Him in this way. But there is wrong as well as right activity even in doing good. A zealous churchman who brings more and more people into his congregation solely to satisfy his own ego is not going to please God through that activity. To realize the presence of the Divine Indweller should be the first desire in every heart.

It is when you persistently, selflessly perform every action with love-inspired thoughts of God that He will come to you. Then you realize that you are the Ocean of Life, which has become the tiny wave of each life. That is the way of knowing the Lord through activity. When in every action you think of Him before you act, while you are performing the action, and after you have finished it, He will reveal Himself to you. You must work, but let God work through you; this is the best part of devotion. If you are constantly thinking that He is walking through your feet, working through your hands, accomplishing through your will, you will know Him. You should also develop discrimination, so that you prefer spiritually constructive, God-conscious activity to work performed without any thought of Him.

### **Meditation Is the Highest Form of Activity**

But greater than activity, devotion, or reason, is meditation. To meditate truly is to concentrate solely on Spirit. This is esoteric meditation. It is the highest form of activity that man can perform, and it is the most balanced way to find God. If you work all the time you may become mechanical and lose Him in preoccupation with your duties; and if you seek Him only through discriminative thought you may lose Him in the labyrinths of endless reasoning; and if you cultivate only devotion for God, your development may become merely emotional. But meditation combines and balances all these approaches.

Work, eat, walk, laugh, cry, meditate—only for Him. That is the best way to live. In so doing you will be truly happy serving Him, loving Him, and communing with Him. So long as you let the desires and weaknesses of the physical body control your thoughts and actions, you will not find Him. Always be master of your body. When you sit in the church or temple,