

The Way of Attainment

T212 The Inner Teachings 28th August 1951 St Mary Abbot's Place, London

Invocation:

Almighty, Eternal Spirit, in whom all live and move and have being, we humbly seek the way to Thy presence. We pray, O Lord that all children on earth may come to understand Thy laws of spiritual evolution. We in this gathering raise our hearts to Thee, praying that the golden light of Thy Sun may enter this sanctuary, and touch the corresponding spark of light within every soul here. O may we feel the glory of Thy light and know the truth! In Thy holy name we pray that the vision of earth people may be cleared, so that they may see beyond the mists of the material life into the worlds of light. May they know forever that all is eternal life and progression, and that there is no death but only unfoldment and growth and progress into the heart of Love. In Thy holy name we call upon the angels of the Christ circle and the illumined souls, upon those who have passed through the shadows and are now in full consciousness in the light and glory of Thy life in heaven.

Amen.

We once said that we believed in all things. We meant by this that we endeavoured to understand the meaning behind every manifestation, every expression of truth. This seems to us to be one of the most important needs—for man* to be ever ready to listen to truth. When man closes his mind there is need for sorrow because he remains—well, not static—but even retrogressive. You may think at times that what we say sounds somewhat old-fashioned, or perhaps what some would call ‘orthodox.’ Nevertheless we would have you remember that in the ancient scriptures (which today seem to be outmoded) there is secreted eternal truth. It is for the searcher after truth, for the progressive soul to seek understanding or an interpretation of these scriptures.

*[*For editorial policy on gender issues, see the introduction.]*

At our last group we were asked how the teachings of the Lord Buddha compared with the teachings of Jesus Christ.* We gave a brief answer, but would like to deal more fully with that question tonight.

*[*See Inner Teaching no. T 210.]*

Those of you who practise meditation will know that when the object of your meditation is the Lord Buddha, you find yourself before his gracious silent presence, which is pervaded by a peace and stillness almost beyond comprehension. The tendency, when you come into the thought-field of the Buddha, is to slow down all mental activity, and to arrive at the centre of silence. Compare this path with our present method of entering into meditation or contemplation. You know that the whole ritual of meditation is to silence all sound in yourself. While it is impossible to silence your environment in a town, you can train yourself so that quietness rules in your physical, in your mental, in your emotional and astral body. You can so rule your magnetic field that you come to a place of complete and utter stillness.

Why do you do this? Because it is necessary to quieten the outer life in order to become aware of the jewel within the lotus, this jewel being the divine spark, the divine

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consciousness within the innermost being of man. Those people who are most active in the flesh and in the mind live in a mental world of turbulence, and are unable to hear God's voice.

The whole purpose of incarnation, the purpose of life, is for the soul to develop first self-consciousness, and later, God-consciousness. This development of self-consciousness is, shall we say, the beginning of individuality. The ego* has become clothed in flesh. It has become, shall we say, God-incarnate! But this beautiful truth is not recognised, is not apprehended in the early or unconscious stages. The child, the babe, from its birth gradually develops awareness of its surroundings, gradually develops self-consciousness. What you perceive in the unfoldment of the child, so you will also recognise in the spiritual evolution of the man. In its crudest stage, the soul is struggling for self-expression and to attain self-consciousness because it has come from the Whole, from the divine Spirit. It is a spark, an out-breathing, an offshoot, a seed of the Godhead, and it remains unaware of itself or its potentialities. The whole work of the soul from the beginning is to develop itself. You see this going on everywhere. You see the effort made by the soul to gain this consciousness of itself. For this reason a great deal of selfishness comes about, because the soul is innately selfish. It has its work to find self-expression and self-consciousness. This process long endures until later the soul begins to be aware of something other than self (that is, the soul concerned only with its own development). The soul becomes aware of a spark within which is the God-spark, the flame. At that event the unfoldment of God-consciousness commences. In this process the soul learns the necessity for silencing the outermost plane upon which it is living. This accomplished, it will have to attain silence on the emotional plane and then on the mental until it becomes aware of the place of Silence. There only it finds its true self; it accepts its sonship with God.

*[*When White Eagle uses the term 'ego' he does not mean the term in the way some psychologists use it but rather, as here, to mean a higher, larger self.]*

This being so, we suggest that the teaching of the Lord Buddha, when rightly understood, was chiefly concerned with this preparation of the soul, which, remember, takes a long, long time. Man accepts a most erroneous idea of time, but this is rather too vast a subject for tonight. Man will someday overcome this sense of time, and time will give place to eternity. Indications of this evolution of the soul can be found in, say, the conception of the fourth dimension by science. We mean by this the inventions, as you call them—we would prefer to say the revelations of modern life—as in the instruments now provided to register material light and sound.

This development from self-consciousness to God-consciousness takes place through, shall we say, a medium—not a medium in the spiritualistic sense, but a form of expression. This form of expression of the individuality through its many incarnations is known as man's personality. We repeat: the development of the individuality takes place through the personality of man during many incarnations. This underlying individuality results from the development of the self-conscious state and the personality comes from the development of the God-conscious state in man, and is its expression. We illustrate this by drawing attention

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to the personality of the avatars, the Christs. And we hold the personality of Jesus Christ as the greatest example. Both the Lord Buddha and Jesus Christ expressed the individualised soul. Buddha, the beautiful, gentle, wise, still personality through whom the golden light shone, came from the heart of the Omnipresent, the Omnipotent and the Omniscient. Jesus was the personality through whom the sweetness and beauty of the light of Christ manifested, so that men and women could understand the meaning and the power of divine love. In the life of Buddha there was a pointing of the way, a revealing of the path which the soul must tread on its upward climb towards its Father–Mother God. That way was the renunciation of desire.

The question put to us was: how did the teaching of Buddha on desirelessness harmonise with the teaching of Jesus the Christ? The questioner asked if it was right that the soul should attain this degree of desirelessness and seek Nirvana, the place or state of consciousness that some people interpret as meaning the annihilation of the individuality (although they are wrong). There is *never* annihilation of individuality, but instead an at-one-ment. This stage is called Nirvana because the soul reaches a condition of utter love, peace and at-one-ment with universal life—not to remain in that state evermore, by the way. At that moment, the soul comes into the fullest understanding of the meaning of the three Principles which underlie all life—Love, Wisdom and Power. When the individual soul enters at-one-ment (which the Buddha called Nirvana) in a sense it loses itself, in that it goes into the ocean of God-consciousness, but it always retains its individuality. Therefore, the descent of the soul into matter is that it may receive full experience of matter and so grow in individuality and in God-consciousness that in the end it holds mastery over physical life.

We repeat again that Buddha pointed out the path towards God-consciousness, towards self-renunciation, and the overcoming of cruelty. His doctrine was the doctrine of love, particularly towards animals and the lower kingdoms. As so often happens, the teachings of these saviours of humanity become misinterpreted and distorted. Cruelty to animals is a great sin and must be recognised and overcome. Man in his process of redemption is bound up with this law. We will not enter into controversial subjects. You can think it out for yourselves, but we say this, that to every soul comes a time when this particular truth is revealed. Once the soul sees truth, then it acts in accordance. If it does not, it sins against holy spiritual laws.

Until man, out of compassion and love for the animal kingdom, refuses to inflict suffering, animals will continue to suffer. Even so, the animals have a law unto themselves. As Jesus taught, 'Not a sparrow falls to the ground but your Father in heaven knows it.' Man has to learn, through observation first, then through feeling. Then he will know the meaning of suffering. The soul has to evolve gradually. Here is a very serious thought, which opens a wide subject. So much unconscious cruelty towards the animal kingdom and through the human, exists. Unthinkingly, men are very cruel. They only begin to learn how cruel they are when the Christ light within commences to rise and stimulates all their vehicles. Once the light begins to shine through, they will themselves feel the suffering which they inflict. We are aware that very few people are wilfully cruel, but many are ignorantly cruel. As Jesus said on the cross, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'

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If humans knew what they were doing they would never inflict pain. The whole purpose of life, therefore, is this quickening and development, or the ascension of the Son within the human soul. The Son is the Light, and the Light is Christ, and Christ is the Son of the Father–Mother God.

So, having seen that the Lord Buddha came to point the path, to illumine the way towards the Light, we see that Jesus Christ came to demonstrate the *power* of this Light. The Lord Buddha taught the going in, the path in towards the Centre. Christ taught the path out into action, into life. 'I am the Light of the world.' These wonderful words set forth the mission of Jesus. 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me,'—by and through the personality of Jesus. This is the path, the way, the individualisation and the personification. Your orthodox Christian scriptures clearly tell you that he is the example—here is also your illustration.

Now to the question of the unfoldment of these inner faculties, these powers of God. Will they come naturally—even automatically—without any forcing if the candidate merely follows the orthodox Christian life? The answer we give is that the beauty of the character unfolds under the direction and the example of Jesus Christ. Therefore, a good, pure Christian will undoubtedly at the right moment be granted a clear vision. This can happen without the Christian advancing along the path of occultism or psychism. A true and pure Christian life—perhaps not the orthodox Christian life—of loving devotion and practising the teaching, living the life of the Christ spirit comes eventually to awareness, and is granted a vision of heaven and even of the Master. Such a soul will, however, lack knowledge of how the life of Christ links up with the actual physical development or evolution of the body. Such knowledge has been withheld in the past, but can now be given.

This is a grave matter. For this reason those who come back from the spirit stress in their teaching that the first necessity is living the godly, the pure, the brotherly, the truthful, wise life. Here is the foundation upon which all psychic development must be based. This does not mean a lot of high-flown jargon. Jesus revealed to his disciples, to those who were ready, inner truths, but very simply. He also demonstrated the power which the light gave to the son of God, clearly indicating that all who followed the path became sons and daughters of God. He summed up the whole of the gospels in three simple words: 'Love one another.' Man has yet to understand love, to comprehend love. You cannot have love without wisdom.

To go back to the Lord Buddha, to the teaching of the silence and the inner sanctuary of stillness: it is there that we shall find and comprehend the meaning of love. In the silence we can know the glory and the ecstasy of love which leads to reunion with God. The Buddha teaches—as Christ teaches—that whatever you do to your brother man, you do to yourself. You cannot inflict pain on any living creature and not suffer it yourself eventually. Once you arrive at the state of God-consciousness you feel the pain inflicted upon all creation, and so that brings forth the realisation of what love is. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Inflict pain on others and you yourself must suffer. You cannot escape. You could not bear to inflict pain upon a child you loved dearly. You would feel it yourself.

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To do this, of course, man has to develop his imagination. Here again we come up against a difficult lesson. You cannot jump your hurdles. You must take them one at a time. As you go over one, another looms ahead. One step at a time, and do not attempt to get all the answers at once, because the answers of the future depend upon your knowledge of the present. So you have to have confidence and faith. You have to have a steady spirit with an urge to keep on keeping on, no matter what life does to you. You must grip the situation, whatever it is, and keep your vision on God. The neophyte of old was clearly shown that if he tried to rush forward he would come up against a sharp sword which could wound him. This has an esoteric spiritual meaning. You have seen foolhardy people who have tried to rush the gates of heaven. Generally they have had to suffer. So the order is to proceed with caution, with confidence and with great love in your heart for God. Then you will have love for your brother man, and the true Christian life reaches that point which you call 'salvation.' 'Salvation' means that the soul has seen truth, has left behind the desires of the flesh and is approaching the state of God-consciousness and God at-one-ment. God 'at-one-ment' is the same as the Buddhist Nirvana.

One more word: whereas the Christian accepts the belief that Jesus Christ will do the work for him, the truth is that every man must work for himself. 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that will he surely reap.' This is a basic truth. Man must strive towards the salvation of his soul. He cannot leave the task to Jesus or to any other master. This law also applies to spiritual healing, because many people think they can let other people do the work. It does not happen like that. Every soul must work, must develop, must attain mastery. No one else can do it for you. In other words, you are set your lessons in every incarnation and you must give proper attention to your lessons. Then you will without doubt graduate at the end of your term. Self-development, self-realisation you will find is a fundamental truth throughout all the scriptures of the East and of the West, including the Christian.

We leave you with these few thoughts, and pray that the light may be stimulated in your hearts and that you will have courage and strength to keep on keeping on that path upon which your feet are now set. Then, as night follows day, you will surely reap a reward of great joy and liberation from all bondage.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Benediction:

Brethren, let us create the image of the great disc of golden light, the golden light, the Christ light which has the power to create and to renew every physical cell, which has the power to make all crooked places straight, and to bring the soul at last to the eternal state of God-consciousness. O Father–Mother God, we Thy little children seek to draw close to Thy heart. We receive now the outpouring of Thy love, and are blessed and refreshed for our journey towards Thee. So mote it be!

Amen. Amen. Amen.

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Illumination, vegetarianism, veganism, meat

