

# What is True Religion?

A106 Sunday Address 5th July 1942 ?St Mary Abbots Place, London ?Sunday Service

*Text:* printed in *Angelus*, September 1942. The copy from which this record is typed has annotations by Michael Collishaw, but they appear to date from his reading the Address at some point many years later in Roermond, Netherlands.

*Context:* although it is undated there is no script for a July 1942 address and it had become conventional to print the July Sunday address in September. So conjecturally but not without good reason the date of 5<sup>th</sup> July is ascribed to this, and it is reasonable to assume the context was a Sunday service at St Mary Abbots Place. See also, however, the note on the address ascribed to 1<sup>st</sup> March 1942.

*General Notes:* the address contains one familiar saying of White Eagle's, namely that 'the soul who understands can go into any religious gathering, into any church or temple throughout the world, and can enter into communion with God'. Later White Eagle refers to 'the masses' but this is clearly not meant in any disrespectful way; he is simply using the language of his medium's time. White Eagle has useful comments on the interrelation of religion and commerce and religion and art.

*References:* 'Except ye become as a little child' is one of White Eagle's most frequent quotations: Matthew 8 : 33. The place of 'wailing and gnashing of teeth' is originally from Matthew 13 : 42 but is referred to as many seven times in the New Testament; and the Holy City, New Jerusalem, is described in Revelation, chapters 21–22. 'Except ye become as a little child' is Matthew 18 : 3.

## White Eagle's Address:

What is religion? What is your particular religion? And what will the religion of the future be? Many people are asking these questions today. In the first place, what is it that man is seeking at the present time, usually unconsciously, but sometimes consciously? Man is seeking God. You find it difficult to accept this statement when chaos rules, when warfare rages everywhere. What can it be that is stirring man and causing him to do these things? It is an urge for truth, for justice, for liberation from bondage which he does not yet understand. Every day, behind the suffering, the blackness, evil and cruelty of humanity, is this striving for freedom, liberty: and this means in the end liberation from that which binds the soul to earthliness. The soul desires to express that which is within itself, and this apart from the intellect: the soul desires to express the divine essence of which it is constituted, to express love. From the consciousness of the lowest strata of society to man's peak of realisation and illumination, this urge persists.

What, then, is religion? Is it the worshipping of some nebulous 'something' unknown and unknowable in a temple, church or cathedral? Is religion merely the observance of ceremonies and ritual which are often empty shells? What, then, is religion? This is what we ask ourselves. We want to know what the religion of the future is likely to be, realising that the present warfare has its purpose, that purpose being to peel the layers of materialism from man's soul.

It does not look much like it now, does it? Nevertheless, this is the underlying purpose of the upheaval: to strip away the coats, the layers of materialism from man's soul. Man will then be naked and will find his solace, his comfort, his happiness and at last his place in life by realisation of his true self and his true nature.

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It is not necessary to prove survivalism to the awakened soul who sees the manifestation of God in every form of life. That man knows that behind all the manifestations of life is the unknowable, the boundless, the infinite. A perfect justice, which is itself the spirit of beauty and love, is bringing forth through form, through matter, its own glory, that which takes shape in men's souls as happiness, enlightenment, liberation. The soul which is awakened knows no death, but only constant change and evolution; to the awakened soul life is ever unfolding, ever evolving, and all forms and ceremonies, all forms of religion, are merely focal points for the manifestation of the supreme truth. The awakened soul looks, therefore, for the coming of the Light, of God, and waits. It is able to recognise this light in every form, whether that form be of the human family, of the nature kingdom, or of the angelic. He looks in all beings for the Light, for the essence, for the life-force of the Creator. Therefore the soul who understands can go into any religious gathering, into any church or temple throughout the world, and can enter into communion with God, because he knows that true religion is universal.

Religion is to be found everywhere – in every temple, in every clime, in every creed, where there is a true worship and communion with that spiritual essence behind all form. The question now arises, how can men truly worship the divine expressed in human form, as a Teacher who was but a man like themselves! To answer, we bear in mind all the lesser teachers and the greater, and even that supreme manifestation of the Light called Christ. We worship, my brethren, not the man but the light manifesting through the man. In all countries, in all forms of religions, we worship the one supreme Light.

We ask ourselves, how can man in his present lowly stage of enlightenment understand the beauty of God, unless he recognise the beauty expressed in the face and soul of one who is man like himself? This is why the teachers came in ages past to touch the heart of man. Each teacher manifested something beautiful, fine, true, in a dark world. This is why the saints came down to earth, and why they will continue to descend. This brings us to a great question – will there be a Second Coming of the Master amongst men, and what form will this Second Coming take? Will it be some special manifestation of love, of the Christ-like in the hearts of the masses? Yes, Christ will arise in the hearts of men, but it will also be something more, because God never leaves mankind without a witness to God. Illumined souls are even now dwelling in the quiet places of the earth and radiating light. Discarnate teachers are now very close to the earth and make use of human channels to help mankind in its awakening. The supreme law comes into operation when the Way has been prepared and the masses are ready to understand.

My friends, how can the masses be prepared – how given this Divine understanding? We think reforms in education must come, and the young mind, instead of being taught to worship money, fame, power and position, will learn to search after the spirit of God behind all forms of life. The young will be helped to unfold their natural aspirations towards God. Their lessons will not be the unnatural cramming with facts accumulated by the minds of

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clever people, but a gentle and natural drawing out or unfoldment of the divine mind in the child.

Will the religion of the future affect commerce and industry? Some will question what connection can there be between such two extremes as these. Nevertheless, religion will profoundly modify both. Instead of the inventions of machinery designed to enable money to be amassed and the soul of the workers to be killed, the inventions and equipment of industry will come to be regarded as a trust from God to help man to sustenance and freedom. Such an outlook will relieve the masses from oppression and toil, giving opportunities for culture and spiritual growth, which will help mankind to unfold latent spiritual gifts and to cultivate art, music, literature and science. Man will be able to delve into the past and learn from the ancients the secrets which made those men wise and helped civilization of the past ages. The Spirit of God will be uncovered in the souls of men and therefore a universal brotherhood will come to the earth. Each man will recognise the godlike in his brother man, and will know that he himself cannot be other than kind, considerate, helpful and brotherly.

We would like to take you on a visit to the spirit world, to the creative sphere where artists work. We would like to show you the temples of art. The spiritual artist creates these temples of pulsating colour and light which solidify and take form. It is impossible for you whilst enclosed in the flesh to picture these grand temples. You would be amazed to see an artist create, almost as rapidly as thought, a picture expressing the light of the Spirit. This picture might represent a landscape, a seascape or a portrait; instead of expressing just the outline of a tree, bush, view or seascape, or figure of a man or woman, it becomes an expression of the godlike, and of light taking form or life. The picture becomes alive, pulsating with harmony and with colour.

As a contrast we can take you to a lower plane of consciousness where the artists work with material on earthly technique. Their minds are clear, their art skilful, but it is still a mind enslaved. Such artists are not illumined, not liberated, but bound. They work as though they themselves cannot see. Others from higher planes looking on can see that their brain is as it were in a box. The soul, enslaved by mind, by convention, by earthly things, has in the Spirit to break these bonds, to become liberated from confinement before being able to express the perfect beauty of God. The same lesson is learned in the sphere of music, in the sphere of literature, and in the sphere of religion. Certainly there are spheres of religion! The whole point is that unless man's soul learns to liberate itself it will still be confined for a while in the beyond by the same cramping thoughts which it harboured on earth.

The purpose of religion, then, is to enable man to liberate himself from the bondage of the lower mind or earthly thought. How can this be done? Man must learn to readjust his life values; he must learn to look behind the form for motive, to look behind all ceremonies and ritual, all religions, for the one true light of God. This has been done by many, particularly in the East. How can man best find his freedom? We understand how earthbound is the soul; with what difficulty the soul reaches liberation. There is one sure way, and this is through prayer. We have purposely introduced the theme of prayer because someone asked if prayer

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was no useless, at all events as men pray today. The questioner said people are always asking God to do something for them. 'Therefore I cannot see', said our friend, 'that prayer serves any great purpose in man's life, when it only satisfies desires which may or may not be selfish?'

Our answer is this: What do we mean by prayer? Asking an unknown deity to come to our aid and take from us all sorrow and sickness, to shoulder for us the burdens which we have earned for ourselves? No. Prayer, my friends, is an entering into communion with God. Prayer is opening the heart, and a child can do this, and a child very often more effectively than an adult. A child has no hidebound intellect; a child is simple and knows God. As the Master Jesus said, 'Except you become as a little child, ye cannot enter the Kingdom'. Therefore simplicity must reign in the heart, for the great man is the simple man. The great man is he who knows that of himself he can do nothing, but that all he accomplishes is done by God, his Creator.

True prayer is the entering the Silence. This is not achieved in a moment, but only through sincere aspiration and trust in the Lord. The soul who knows the Silence has found God and has found his religion. Religion up-welleth in the heart of man. The religion of the future will be a loving respect in the heart of man for the light of God in the heart of his brother man. Then will be swept away greed, anger, ugliness, hate, warfare; then will be swept away slums, poverty, sickness, sorrow, death. Then will be no more weeping or wailing or gnashing of teeth, for men and women will have created an ideal, and the Holy City, a Jerusalem golden with tolerance, brotherhood, love, will be made manifest on earth.

Listen, my friends; if a man lives for the good of his companions, whether that man lives in Russia, in England, Africa, Australia, or India – wherever he is, if he be constantly considerate for the welfare of his brother by his side, he is a truly religious man. He is truly a God-man. This is how we define religion, and this is the religion of the future. We see each man as his own priest. We see men gathering together in communities, because of the additional power which the community brings to them to glorify their Creator.

This, my dear ones, is what we work for, and what we have to bring about. We start now, this very night, you and we. We commence by finding that silent place in our own hearts which urges us to be kind and to love our brother, which enables us to seek the light of God shining in the face of every man, woman and child. Then shall we hear the voice of God in the birds, and smell the essence of God in the flowers. Then, to drink a cup of water is to drink the wine of life, God's life essence; to eat our food knowing that food is a gift from the Divine, and so life will become a ritual, a sacrament, and every man be his own priest and as a flame in the heart of every man will burn the one universal religion with which God has endowed man.

Peace be in the hearts of my friends; receive the blessing of the great Christ, the Light, our Creator, Father–Mother. *Be still ... and know God.*

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*The search matches with either words and phrases, which appear in the text, or the following 'key' words and phrases, which are similar in meaning to those in the document:*

*faith, path of the soul, initiation, illumination, inspiration, community, communion, higher mind, divine law, ancient laws*

