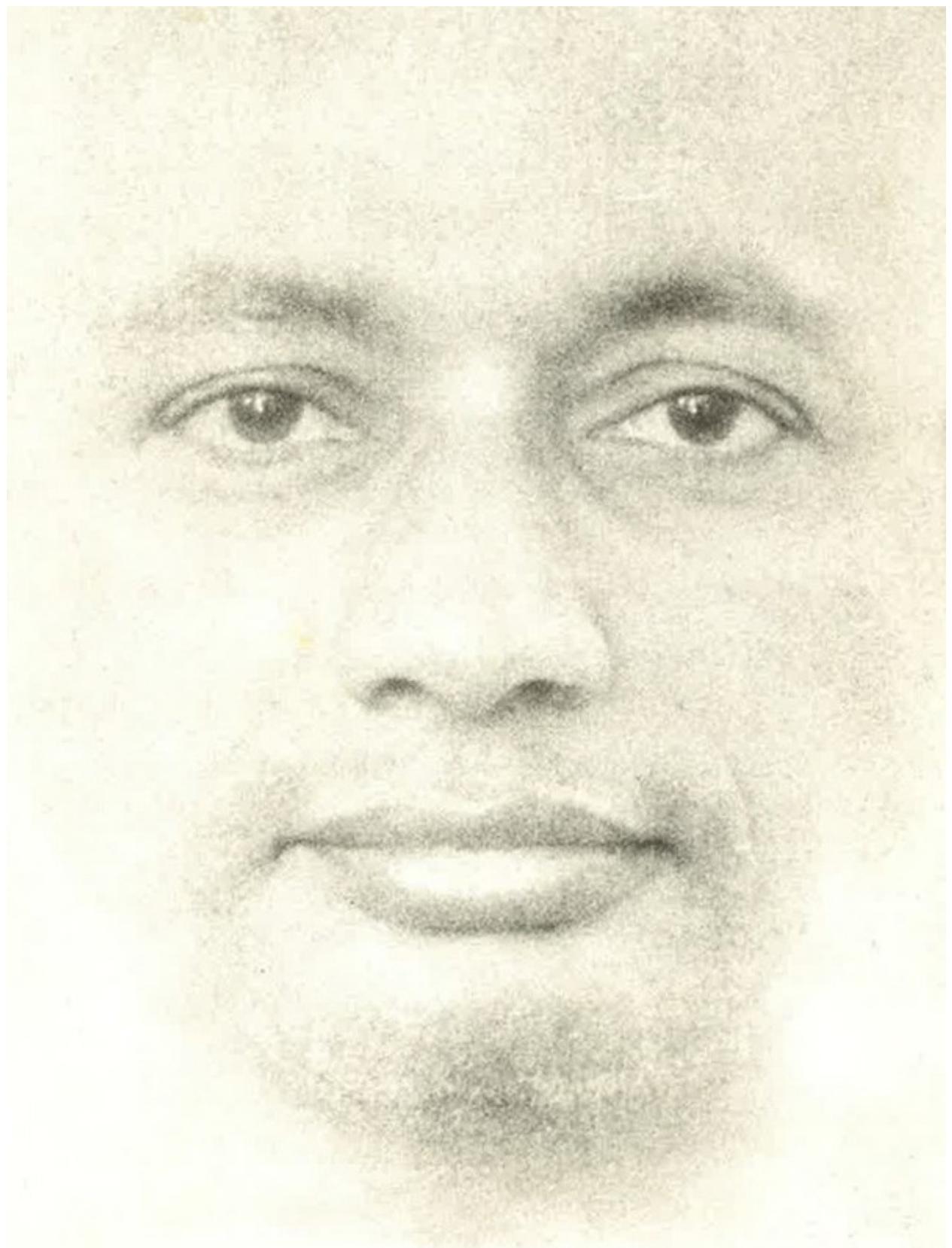


SENSE
ESSENCE
AND
NON-SENSE

VOLUME 1



Swami Venkatesananda



Dedication

My Gurudev, Sri Swami Sivananda, used to treat all the conventional "valuables" with total indifference. Money, expensive articles, and such others that we value had none for Him.

But there was one exception: a piece, a scrap of paper on which He had recorded a passing thought. Everything He wrote had to be typed "three copies", properly checked - always by Him, and kept with different responsible persons - the first, Himself.

He once explained: "Money can be earned. Ashram can be built. But the thought, once lost, is lost forever."

Gurudev used to do this. He would record important thoughts after some lectures or talks.

His thoughts were from God. He regarded Himself and all of us as mere channels for their flow. They were sacred.

To assume authorship is one type of vanity. To treat them callously is another type of vanity.

Gurudev had no objection at all to other people plagiarizing His writings - so long as the knowledge was spread.

But He was "impatient" if they were allowed to be lost.

These flower petals are once again offered at the divine lotus Feet of my Gurudev Sivananda.

They belong to Him. They do not belong to me and often I have never had those ideas before.

I hear them first; they originate in the Feet of Gurudev.

At the Feet of my Gurudev in the reader's heart, I humbly dedicate this collection.

My grateful thanks to my Gurudev Swami Sivananda, who perpetually inspires us from within, whose Feet are the origin of all good thoughts.

May God bless you all.

Swami Venkatesananda

Foreword

A new volume of 'Sense, Essence and Non-sense' of the sage Swami Venkatesananda makes its debut.

These are gems 'recollected at moments of tranquility' - moments when the mind is attuned with the Divine - for it is only with such divine Grace that the nectar of wisdom begins to flow, the divinity within also begins to glow, and radiate the light of knowledge.

The modern world is in haste. Its destination is unknown nor its course chartered.

Caught in this velocity, the mind too, speeds on this precarious path. It has little time for lengthy discourses on religion.

Some signposts are necessary to redirect the mind on the road to salvation. These short, pithy and at times witty, but down-to-earth truths, each a self-contained moral, serve as landmarks where man must turn off from his present course.

They should have appeal to the young and old, the scholar and the layman. They are simple, void of any proselytising or dogmas, yet thought provoking.

They express in simple language the truths of the scriptures of the East and the West.

Of what is said may be sense, some of it may be non-sense - you take out the essence.

It is 'non-sense' in so far as it is not related to the world of senses.

Some thoughts make sense. Others may be just non-sense, due to faulty medium of their expression, but even they may provoke a great thought in the reader.

True wisdom is above the sensory, because the latter is fleeting, transient, changing, impermanent and temporary.

Truth which is related to Reality is lasting.

These notes are not to be studied as a book, but used to stimulate your own ideas and thoughts.

They are not cogently arranged for that is considered unnecessary for the purpose we have in view.

They may even seem to contradict one another - that again is the purpose - to enable you to see the same truth from different angles, which should be done in regard to any fact or problem.

Prayer

May God bless you all with health, long life, prosperity, and spiritual enlightenment.

May you all walk in the Light of God, with God with your hand in His, with the whole of you in His Palm.

Live in God. Love in God. Serve God in all beings.

May that Supreme Being dwell in your eyes, in your heart, seeing His Own Self in all; seeing God Himself in all.

May we thus swim in the Ocean of Bliss.

May that Peace that passeth all understanding dwell in your heart, radiate from every pore of your skin, bathing everyone who comes within the circle of your aura with that inexpressible peace.

May harmony radiate from you, dispelling the darkness of disharmony wherever it is found.

May bliss radiate from you, dispelling the gloom of suffering, misery, pain - physical, mental, moral and spiritual.

May God lead us from the Unreal to the Real, from darkness to light, from mortality to immortality.

Assert every moment of your life - I am not the body, I am not his finite, limited mind, I am the Immortal Self.

May you be established in that Self-Realisation right now.

Swami Venkatesananda

Mind - Friend or Enemy?

Mind is our greatest enemy and our greatest friend.

If it is a pure mind - sensible and pure, it can guide us.

It can guide us into the sanctuary and take us to the threshold of intuition.

If it is an evil mind - it can drag us down. In accepting the mind as an enemy, you are accepting fear.

Mind itself is neither good nor bad, but it is what is fed into it that counts.

There is always one part of the mind looking at the other part, whatever you are doing, and therefore, the whole mind cannot be evil.

Free will is God within

Are we victims of the materialistic age, or are we manufacturers of it?

We do have the liberty of expressing our own nature.

That free will is God within and we must not surrender it - not to anyone.

It is very easy to blame society or the age - that is cooking up a lame excuse to cover up our own fears.

Activity

People of inner harmony and peace just 'be' and 'do', and twenty-four hours is a long, long time.

A twinge

I had a twinge in the shoulder blade for just a few minutes this morning, and I was admiring the wisdom of God - Who compels us to depend on one another, by pinching me where I cannot scratch myself.

Problems

Where there is a problem, have a frank discussion with those concerned and decide the best remedy.

When there is no peace of mind, whatever be the cause and whosoever is at fault, cease all argument.

Guru and Disciple

To tune in, you have to be of the same nature. Only if you are of the same nature as the Guru, will you receive His Grace.

As in -

(1) water mingles with water because of sameness of nature (perfect yogi)

(2) milk partly mingles with water, though partly retains its individuality (first class spiritual aspirant = sattvic)

(3) honey mingles with water after a lot of heating (the rajasic aspirant, who strives hard through service to become one with the Guru)

(4) stone will never mix with water - it is of entirely different nature (tamasic type of worldly man).

Law of Karma and Politics

An objector says: "If we suffer for past sins, then, in the face of political oppression, we cannot even murmur".

Quite true. Murmur will only lead to ill-will, ill-will to retaliation, and retaliation to further hatred.

The Law of Karma says: "You hated him in your past birth; so, you are suffering now. Now begin to love him. You will be happy in future."

The love will transform his heart, too, and generate love there.

Yantras

It is quite probable that the Yantras are mystic designs which give the clue to the nature and operation of some elemental force (like geometrical designs for machines).

How and to what each correspond I do not know.

It is as it should be for knowledge (power).

Without wisdom (love), knowledge and use of these Yantras could be dangerous and destructive.

Man, Centre of Creation

This is what we have forgotten - as Pope has said: "The proper study of man is Man."

In Man, too, God is the centre of his being.

If he is harmonised here, he is in harmony with the world and he promotes harmony.

If there is a discordant note within his own heart, he sows the seed of discord everywhere.

Atheist

Should he be left alone?

Why do we stand at street corners and preach?

It is like a mother who finds her baby is not crying for food and consults the doctor knowing that it is ill!

An atheist is not contented, but morbidly satisfied.

Senses

The senses cannot perceive Reality; but accept it, on faith.

Heaven and Hell

When hell can be had here itself, why should there be a separate hell?

Simple: for reasons similar to that which sanction a hotel when there is food in the house.

Whenever there is something special, you go to a hotel.

When some special punishment has to be created, we are sent to hell - other than here!

Humility

Like the frames of spectacles, some people will bend only if they are in hot water!

Science

We do not deny that science has discovered many laws of nature - that the atom has so many protons and electrons.
But I only beg of you not to forget Him Who put them there.
I assure you that the scientist did not.

Idol Worship

Even if there are millions of gallons of water in the ocean, you can take only as much as your vessel can hold.
Similarly, even though God is Infinite, you can experience Him for the present, only through your finite mind - limited to Name and Form.
God does not need the form, but your mind does.
God does not need your worship, but you do.

Caste System

Leave alone the Brahmin, but even the Kshtriya and Vaisya have to do something to keep up their birth-caste.
You cannot say : "My grandfather was a millionaire, and so shall I be."
If you are not good at business, you are a pauper!
Similarly, if you say: "My grandfather was a hero in battle", your enemy will not flee!

Ignorance

Life is an opportunity, but ignorance converts it into a burden.
God created a lot of work for Man to do; but ignorance transforms it into hardship.
Man has his duty to his fellowmen, but ignorance makes it a mill-stone around his neck, weighing him down with cares and anxieties.
Wealth and wisdom, God entrusted to Man to serve his neighbour, but ignorance bound him with them in the fatal ties of possessiveness.

Upadhis

A small jar, within a bigger jar, bigger and bigger (four others).
Break the five to find out what is in them - but that very instance, the space in the jars becomes one with the space outside.
Like Atma - the Self) and Jiva - the individual soul.

Life.

Life is an art.

Spiritual life or Sadhana is still greater art.

Every stroke of the brush matters very much - we should carefully plan it and do every action after great thought.

Thought, word and deed must be delicate and purposeful.

Human Beings

Human beings have to be handled the human way!

Now that is the only difficult thing for a human being!

Impatience

Impatience in Sadhana is wrong.

It covers up the wrong motives and attitude of the ego.

Christian Trinity

Father - Iswara.

Son - "I" (Jiva)

Holy Ghost - Atman in which the Jiva realises His identity with Brahman.

Hence "I and my Father are one" and "He who sees the Son has seen the Father."

This can be translated as "Aham (son), Atma (Holy Ghost), Brahma (Father) - or the Son is one with the Father through the Holy Ghost.

Purify

You cannot recognise God until your heart is purified.

Better purify your heart first - then you will see God in all names and forms.

Ease

Turning away from God is disease.

Turn to God and be at perfect ease within.

Glue

The mind has the quality of glue and it glues itself to something or someone.

Friendship can be like glue - it does not hurt while you are stuck; but the trouble comes when you have to "give up."

Friendships like sticking plasters have to be removed and renewed.

Consciousness

Plants and animals have simple consciousness.

Humans who think "I am" have self consciousness.

But to be conscious of God in every action and in everything in the universe, both animate and inanimate, that is Cosmic Consciousness.

If you want to become established in this consciousness, you must remove the veil of ignorance.

Right knowledge

The Self is entirely independent and exists without the need for anything or anybody else.

Let wrong knowledge go by turning on the light of right knowledge.

Chase foolish thoughts away by looking within; when desire, attachment and clinging infatuation go, fear and anger go too.

Only if we have a guilty conscience need we have fear in our heart.

And if you are not depending upon God but upon yourself, then there is also fear.

Sublimate

Suppressing the senses is very dangerous, and this danger can be expressed in these three words: "suppression, compression, explosion!"

Starving the senses does not get rid of the desire, and while you are running away from the objects of the senses, the desire is building up.

Wisdom consists in not suppressing desires but in sublimating them.

Sublimate your desires by prayer and spiritual practices.

Charity

Do not stray away from Dharma, your obligatory duties.

Set definite rules and ideals such as feeding the poor every day, giving charity and serving someone more unfortunate than yourself.

But beware of boosting the ego and attaching yourself to these actions.

Do not expect any return but do everything for the sake of God.

A four-fold attitude

To help us attain peace and happiness there is a four-fold attitude towards the world which we should try to cultivate:

1. Develop friendliness towards people on our own level.

2. To those who are at a little lower level in any way, have compassion, not contempt. Serve, help and try to teach them.

3. Those who are superior to us in any way we must look upon with joy. Do not be jealous and envious. Do not try to bring them down but be happy that they have that position and always rejoice at the prosperity and good fortune of others.

4. There are those who are wicked or those who regard themselves as our enemies. In spite of all your efforts of goodwill, you will still have enemies who are jealous, frightened and envious of you. Be completely indifferent to them. Bless them and forget them. If the person who has unkind feelings towards you is someone close to you and it is not possible to forget him, then love him. Do not try to "forgive" someone as that forms a feeling of superiority and hurts them and provokes them all the more. Do not even refer to the thing which the person has done to you, and if you can ignore the whole man, do so, or ignore that aspect of his relationship with you.

Frankness and Humility

Very often we are really cowards, not humble, and sometimes it is a form of arrogance, not humbleness.

A man who is truly humble is fearless.

There should be no fear of criticism or any other fear at all.

An Absurd Ideal

Consciously cultivate godly nature by learning to say things like "God's Grace", "This is God's Will", and become aware of God more and more.

Ultimately as a whole, what all this is, we shall never know, because we are part of the part, and have no means of objectifying the whole - which is an absurd ideal.

Faith-Experience-Realisation

Physics and metaphysics can only describe the nature of the universe.

Both will postulate categories which are beginningless - the atom is beginningless, so is ignorance or cause-effect relationship.

They can never describe the origin of the universe - it is beyond the intellect which itself is an effect of the fundamental postulate.

Revelation is our only guide-test.

Faith is inevitable and experience or realisation thereof.

Adversity

Even though Drupada was wicked and was deservedly heading towards defeat, Sanjaya does not deride him, but glorifies him.

We should not laugh at the adversity of even our adversary, but try to encourage him and lend him a helping hand.

Gita I.2.

The Spirit behind

Whatever service is done for mankind is accepted by God.

The poor man, the sick man, the downtrodden person whom we serve - are nothing but God Himself who comes to us in these forms in order to give the opportunities to purify our hearts.

You may not have the wealth to give or the knowledge and faculties to offer; but if you offer a flower, some fruit or a glass of water to someone in need, this is acceptable to God.

A glass of water to a thirsty man is more valuable than hundreds of pounds to an institution.

Quality rather than quantity is necessary, and it is the spirit behind the action that matters.

Religion

Religion, real religion, is ancient and older than time itself, yet ever new.
Religion needs no name. Love God, Serve All - that is Religion.
If a religion creates a division, then that religion is a fracture!

Con-fusion

Without confusion there is no fusion.

Vanity

St. Francis of Assisi visited a town in which a very rich man lived.
This man wanted St. Francis' blessing, and knowing that the Saint was a humble man he threw off his costly robes and donned poor garments so that he should appear poor and humble.
He stood in front of St. Francis and asked for His blessing.
St. Francis looked at him and then said: "Your vanity shows through the holes in your robe".
Humility comes from the heart, not by creating an outward facade.
Particles are always attracted to a magnet but the attraction is stronger when the particles are clean.

Philosophy

Philosophy is not for the club table - it is for practical application.

Karma

Buddhi Yoga unites our intelligence with God and when Self-realisation is attained, the fruits of Karma will no longer find the personality there.
The following illustration will make this clearer.
During the Spring of one year, birds nest in a tree in your garden.
The following winter you decide to chop this tree down.
When the birds return in the spring of the next year, they do not find the tree and fly away.
This is what happens to your Karma.
It is not there and re-birth is unnecessary.

Reward

Do not look for external differences between a saint and a layman.
It is the inner attitude that counts.
The worldly man is attached to the action and expects reward.
The saint? He is unattached and expects no reward for his service.

Understanding

Do you know yourself?

No? Then how can you hope to understand others if you do not understand yourself?

Learn to know yourself by studying the mind.

As the spiritual path opens up to you, so will you learn to understand people and situations that you could not understand before.

Become one with them, see them as they see themselves - that is real understanding.

All of us can work wonders provided there is love, unity and understanding. Intolerance is a terrible animal quality - but tolerance that smacks of arrogance.

Come down a step and we have Love.

Come further down and you have Understanding.

Do not stand on top and tolerate me.

Do not stand beside me and love me.

Stand below me and under-stand me.

When you do this you will then really know the meaning of the word 'understand' - you will be conscious of it, you will feel it within you, and therefore towards others.

You will know how they feel and you will see the whole show from their eyes.

Help

Never force anyone against their will to receive help.

Offer your services - and if they are not wanted, say "God Bless You" and go on your way - with love in your heart.

Why are we failures?

People are failures because they dare not use their free will to its fullest degree.

You have a right to live 'now'.

You must use that right now and make the fullest use of it.

Why do people not use opportunities given to them?

Because they are always fighting them.

If anything or anyone hurts you, accept this as your Karma.

Say "Thank you and God bless you."

Keep your eyes on the road and, instead of hurting someone who has hurt you, keep looking at the road ahead. Your mind will be calm and you will find a way out of any situation.

'Did' is past, so now 'do'.

Violence

If a man uses violence under provocation, he is bringing himself down to the level of the one who has provoked him.

To be violent is to show weakness.

God helps

I have never understood the expression “God helps those who help themselves.”

If you cannot help yourself, why should God help you?

Either you lead your life or God leads it.

That is all - there is nothing more.

Either you do it or He does it.

Guru

A Guru is one from whom you receive a spiritual awakening.

Mental Penance

True mental penance is to deny the mind what it wants.

You must feel miserable for a time, otherwise you are cheating yourself.

But there it can become very tricky.

If you become happy that you are miserable, it is then not mental penance but boosting the ego.

Elderly

It will do no harm to children to have to exercise compassion and patience with elderly people.

Spiritually it will teach them a great deal.

Yoga

As we live in a house, so must we live in a mansion of Yoga.

Butter

Do not look for results, for only God knows what goes on in the world, and the results may be quite different to what anyone expects. There is no connection between action and reward-that is God's business.

Happiness

If you fulfill your duties and if while doing this you surrender yourselves to God, not with a long face, but joyously, every action you perform will be filled with happiness.

Righteousness

He who regards righteousness as a cow and uses it to milk the rewards, defeats the purpose of righteousness and he derives no benefit from it at all.

Kama

The world has not been tied around our necks, we tie ourselves to the world.
But we can tie ourselves to God.

Two young men were standing on the bank of a river which was in spate.
They saw a black 'bundle of blankets' or something that looked like it, hurtling downstream.

One man wanted to jump into the stream and salvage 'the bundle' - it could fetch them some money!

The other man, however, felt that the risk was not worth the value.

Yet, the impetuous young man rushed headlong into the stream and swam towards 'the bundle'.

He had caught it, but, instead of swimming back towards the bank, he, too, was floating downstream with 'the bundle'.

The friend, standing on the bank of the river, began to shout - "Let it go and come away, if it is too heavy."

But the drowning man replied: "I am prepared to leave 'the bundle', but 'the bundle' of blankets does not let me go".

You know why? It was not a 'bundle' of blankets, but a wild bear which was drowning in the river and, when it saw this man swimming towards it, caught hold of him!

We ourselves seek this 'bundle' on account of Kama - desire, and later cry aloud that it has caught hold of us.

Happy

Do not expect things in your life, do not entertain hope, and you will always be happy.

Make no appointments and you will have no disappointments.

Worship

Use the Yoga exercises and instructions to steady the mind, but translate these into your lives.

All sounds proceed from Om.

Treat whatever you say as Japa (repetition) of Om, and treat all that you do as worship of God.

You do not have to worship God in special places only or hold any special thoughts.

Bring Yoga into every action and thought in your lives.

God

Develop the feeling that you only have God to protect you.

Everything that happens and everyone that looks after you and everything that you have is God only, and is God's Will.

God comes in these forms to give us guidance and comfort.

Fear

Only if we have a guilty conscience, need we have fear in our heart.
If you are depending upon yourself and not upon God, then there will also be fear.

Self

"He whom the Self chooses, to him it is revealed".
Smacks of predestination. It should not be taken literally.
It only emphasises the great Truth that the ego-sense must vanish before the Self can be realised.
When docs the ego know it is not there?
When can one declare: "Now I am in deep sleep" - who says it?
The Upanishad says in effect: "Sleep comes to him whom it likes!"
Surrender yourself and reduce the ego to zero.
You will have Self-realisation.
But do not anticipate this - for such anticipation will awaken the ego!

Existence

Scientists are studying stars two billion light years away - which do not exist now!
If they do not exist - how can they study non-existence!
Yet they can - for the star exists as a traveling image.
Puzzles:
1. What is existence and what is non-existence?
2. To the All-seeing eye, how will all this appear?
Either as Eternal Existence or Eternal Non-existence?

Puja - Worship

External Puja must become internal - then it must become part of our being.
External sweets must become internal - ie. you must eat; only then there is satisfaction.
Then it is assimilation; it becomes part of every cell of your being.

Condemn

You cannot condemn any religion. The reason is simple.
In order to condemn or even compare you should have a thorough knowledge of your and the other religion.
Complete knowledge is possible only via practice.
If you practise your own religion, you will find a life-time is not enough.
Where is the time to condemn others!
He who docs does not practise but prattles has plenty of time.

Prove

Can You Prove the Mahabharata?

But can you disprove it?

If you read Ripley's "Relieve It or Not" you will come across stranger stories!

Children with more heads than one, mothers with unbelievably great numbers of children.

What harm is there in believing?

On the other hand - how much of moral value there is ill faith!

Evil

The problem of evil cannot ultimately be solved by the human mind.

Study scriptures: you find that God is said to create evil, tolerate or even encourage it!

Why? For the simple reason that that is the only way in which the Good can be revealed and exalted.

If you buy a powerful torch, you look for darkness to prove its quality.

If you flash it in daylight, you will be disappointed.

Faith

Without initial faith we shall not enter the religious life.

You believe the words of the electrician that if you put the switch on, the light will burn.

If you do not, the light will not burn, as you will not switch it on.

But you should not be content with this second-hand knowledge!

You should switch it on and see for yourself - practise religion!

Then, you do not say any longer: "The electrician says that the light will burn."

You know it - you say so on your own authority, as it were.

Blind faith ruins religion.

Faith followed by personal experiment and experience, strengthens it.

Bees

Study all the scriptures as a bee collects nectar from the different flowers and makes sweet honey.

But beware - do not manufacture poison.

The bee does not do it.

Svara

Svara - accent or tone in the Vedic recitation - it is like stress and accent in the spoken language whose change of place alters meaning.

Take the sentence "I will eat it".

Emphasis on "I" means "not you".

Emphasis on "will" means "not now".

On "it" means "not other".

First Karma

The first Karma was the jiva's - soul's choice.

Why did one Jiva choose Satva - purity, Rajas - restlessness, or Tamas - dark inertia.

Why is absurd, for here we are not dealing with metaphysics but "history".

Why did Adam disregard God's command and eat the apple?

The question is absurd. That he did is fact, an event in history.

Man

God created only Man - neither Hindus, nor Europeans, etc., nor scientists, etc.

Distinctions are man-made.

Heart

Temple is a building - if it is used as a hospital it will be called so!

Only heart cannot change. God dwells in it.

Moderation

Wind, rain, sun - are given by God in moderation.

Else they will destroy - as is occasionally seen as samples!

Karma Yoga

After offering God what is already His or He, we demand His Grace and some reward!

To get rid of this attitude is Karma Yoga.

Citizen of the world

I am proud to be a Hindu.

But that pride prevents me from being vain, and makes a citizen of the world.

God loves me

"I love God" may be doubtful, insincere.

But "God loves me" is certain.

Learn by our heart

There was a great hero, Kama, whose exploits and chivalry are sung in the Mahabharata. He was once cursed by Parasurama that whatever he (Kama) had learned would prove useless in the hour of need, and that he would forget it. "Kama" also means "car", in Sanskrit.

This story also teaches us a valuable truth: whatever is merely learned through the ear (or other sense including the mind) will prove useless to us in time of need. We should learn by our heart. What we thus learn will become part of our being and in time of need will manifest itself and show us the way.

Humility and Discipleship

Even scientists indirectly admit there is an orderly chaos or a chaotic order in the universe. The universe is expanding - meaning, the planets, etc., are not "stationary" in their orbits and are, while coursing their orbits, ever changing them! They are running, but not running amuck!

Who governs them? The earth is not so solidly "rooted" as our own secure hallucination would have it! Its solid crust is a thin paper afloat on the swimming pool.

That we find Belgium today where it was last year is pure accident - if not a myth! For it is a big floating boathouse, moored to nothing! The face of the earth has indeed changed over aeons! Yet, shall we not get over our foolish notion of its "eternal" solid reality, and repose faith in That Godhead which has preserved the Order in this chaos.

The reservoir may be full - and even the pipe may be big. If you place the pipe over the water level, the water will not flow. Even if the pipe is small - if it is lower than water level water it will flow.

Humility and discipleship alone are needed to gain knowledge.

The Sufferer

The sufferer is "ego-in-ignorance".

Of course, it is admitted that it is ego only when in ignorance.

This suffering-in-ignorance may be quite real - a man involved in a dream accident might cry and this cry might even be ignorantly transferred to his physical vocal chords.

In reality the pain was non-existent - it was, however, truly experienced in the sleeping person.

Only Son

If you add the words "for me"- everyone who believes thus in Jesus can use it. But if you do not recognise this principle, then you can honestly affirm it only if you are omniscient and sure that there has been no other manifestation of God anywhere else at any time.

One

There is only one religion for me - as there is only one mother.

The one-year old child has no need to call that mother by any name. That is better.

But later, when the boy is confronted with other women, he wants to distinguish his mother from others and so knows his mother's name.

Only when we come across other faiths do we feel a need to give our religion a name.

It is, however, wrong to say that only my mother is capable of bearing children and not yours!

Constant

Something that is changing from moment to moment seems to be constant - like the flame of a lamp.

The flames of "fire" are being renewed every moment, by fresh fuel being converted into fire - but the single flame appears constant - and it seems a mystery that, remaining constant and doing nothing, that flame has consumed all the oil!

Change

You cannot immerse in the same water twice in a river.
That water is always changing.

Growth

Life means growth - nothing truly lives which does not grow. Man does not live or grow necessarily because he seems to become fat or lean! Even a balloon "grows big" when inflated, and thin when deflated. Growth is of the soul-evolution.

In an article entitled: "The Age of Change: Scientific and Religious", Harlan T. Stetson says in "Science of Mind", September 1962:

"Considering the very rapid strides in scientific progress and the re-adaptation resulting in consequence, what serious attempt has been made by the organised church to adapt itself to the new demands placed upon it?"

We agree that it is possible to re-interpret religion in terms of the day, as the author demands. But it is an extremely delicate operation. It is dangerous to talk of adaptation! If religion becomes irreligious because that is the popular demand - and thus adapts itself, it might survive - but in what form? As a carcass, not as a living fount of inspiration. I would rather admire the massive rock-temples of South India which say: "This generation may not believe. I shall stand on my own ground so that I can serve the next." We should not compromise in the least on fundamentals, but hold our fort and allow mankind time to discover and recover from the perversity of its tastes.

Art and Artificial

The outer does show the inner development - but in its own way.

But when we apply the perverted and false (though called modern) scale of values, we demand standards from this manifestation which are contrary to it. We apply the laws of darkness (ignorance) to light and find that the light is not luminous.

The "outer" to the soul is the mind: the body is the "outer" to the vital, except the light that shines in and through the eyes.

Guru-Worship

The idol does not question our motives or even our evil actions.

Even dead Gurus are mere "escape valves" for our ego to play.

We must have a living Guru - and if we are devoted to one who is no more, we must see him in a living Guru.

If this living Guru is far away, it is still better to have his own representative nearer home for immediate guidance.

Life

Life is time - utilise it well.

Life is breath - practise Pranayama.

Life is food - be moderate in eating, etc.

Body

Body is left behind by the soul which goes away in the vehicle of the Astral

Body - but leaves even that behind when entering His Abode.

Traditions

Customs like the Deepavali have comprehensive influence on us.

They bring us together - they promote charity - they cement social unity - besides their spiritual meaning.

But it is not always wise to explain these aspects to the people.

If, for instance, we explain that asking one another on Deepavali day "Have you had your Ganges bath?" is a ruse of getting us together and that there is no inherent merit in it, we shall either abandon it, or, if we do it, mechanically, we will get back the feeling of ill-will and hatred for our neighbour on the very next day.

Ignorance of these ideas and faith in the simple fact that they confer spiritual merit upon us will enable us to react spontaneously - and that is the way to ensure that the purpose is really served.

Atom and Atma Jnana

Knowledge of the Self.

We are told that the split atom is so powerful that it can bring about drastic changes in the genes that govern the characteristics of man-normally almost impossible of achievement.

It may be that this is what was aimed at by the practice of Yoga-specially Japa Yoga and Kundalini Yoga. Between the Perfect Soul and the imperfect man there are some fundamental differences-defects. If they are removed, imperfect man will become perfect Yogi. The persistent bombardment of the genes in man enabled this to be affected. This breaking up of the extremely subtle genes, demanded extremely subtle power and the Mantra Chaitanya coupled with concentrated mind did this trick and provided this subtle power.

Ahimsa

Non-injury in Thought, Word and Deed.

Hinduism is built on the basis of Ahimsa.

But, if you are about to perish of hunger for want of any other food, in order to preserve the precious human life, you are allowed to eat flesh.

In order to make sure of this aim, you are warned that if the human birth is not directed towards Self-realisation, it is death - life not worth preserving.

I Would vs I Should!

Sadhana - spiritual practice, in daily life, is not 'to do as I would', but 'to do as I should'.

How many of us can do this?

Unless we can detach ourselves from the little self, what we feel we 'should', is but another expression of the same 'should', with a new excuse.

Unless we can take our stand on Dharma (right conduct) and look at ourselves as an object, we cannot do this.

There was the case of a brother of a King, who had committed a crime, and promptly went over to the King and asked to be punished by cutting his arms away.

If you can do that, you know what you 'should'.

Else, you should have a Guru and Sastra.

God's Will

The only way to know the Will of God is to pray and purify the heart.

Prayer itself purifies the heart.

It is not quite correct to say that - as the heart is getting purer and purer, one can know the Will of God more and more. It is like tuning the radio receiving set.

If you want 50 meters - till you get very close to it, say 48 or up, you will hear nothing. It is as good as zero. When you get to 47, 48, or 49, you will begin to hear something, and at 50 it will be perfect.

Till that point is reached, you will have to go on, depending on Guru and scriptures.

Why Suffering at All?

Evolution takes man "up" to God.

But, past Samskaras - impressions and Vasanas - tendencies, and also his own lower desires tie man to the ground.

This was one of the forms of torture which the medeval Rulers adopted.

Hence, man is unhappy, tortured.

If he wants to be truly happy and free from suffering, he has to let himself go to the Divine Evolutionary Power.

The Heart

In the deep sleep state it is said that the ego rests in the heart - in the dream state it is in the mind.

It should be interpreted thus:

In dream state, the ego is in active association with mind, in contrast to the gross world and body in the waking state.

In the deep sleep state, it rests in the heart - which is the "Life-Centre".

What is that mysterious power in the heart that dilates and contracts it - by which we are able to say whether the "sleeping" man is asleep or dead?

Ultimately it is this action that is responsible for the action of the lungs, pulse, etc.

And where does that power dwell? Obviously in the heart - even as electricity does not need a "hole" to flow through, this power does not need a house or space to live in. The space is therefore regarded as mystic space in the heart.

East

When mankind finds itself enshrouded by darkness, gloom, it turns eastwards
When you are oppressed by the darkness of night, you turn east to see if there is the glimmer of the dawn.

Bread vs Word

It is very confusing to me: people attack Hinduism as polytheism and idolatry - "you have many Gods".

Yet, in Christian England where people affirm their faith in "Jesus Christ, His Only Son, Our Lord" - there is a House of Lords, a whole crowd of them!

And, others, even if they are not so outside, become "My Lord" as soon as they sit on the Bench in Courts of Law.

Isn't this an inferior, ridiculous type of polytheism and idolatry?

Man bowing to Man - and not even with a vestige of holiness - and hailing "My Lord".

Bread is more compelling than the Word.

Good vs Goods

Was Jesus unjust in harshly declaring that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven?

No - because the rich man has goods - several things which he regards and values as good, and these are external and material.

Till he renounces them - by revaluation, he cannot cultivate that which is good, subjective and spiritual.

Evil Eye

You know the superstition "Do not show this ... jewel, etc. to the neighbour; his evil eye will spoil it".

It is only an indirect way of saying, "Do not show it to him; he will become jealous" - and indirectly you are also responsible.

Do not tempt others.

Charity

Is He Worth It? When you ask that question, it is a lame excuse!

If you are sincere, do not put the money back in your pocket, but find the deserving man.

Veracity

1. We live either in our past glory or constantly blaming our ancestors - we do not try to study their teachings and test their veracity. Look forward.

2. We are ashamed of our own culture and religion - and do not endeavour to spread it.

Self-Justification

Self-justification is one of the worst of evils and perhaps the greatest of our obstacles.

Even Rogue Ratnakar justified his actions!

And, there is nothing that can save us from that evil as Guru-seva or surrender to the Guru can.

When Ratnakar surrendered himself to the Maharishi, he "saw" the truth about the world and, eventually, God.

Woman

Who that realises the reverence that the Indian has for the Mother will listen to nonsense about the oppression women in India.

We are even asked to meditate upon our great women Saints every day.

There might be difference of opinion and even minor quarrels between any two people - two sides to the same coin of love.

But let us never forget that they seldom part or divorce.

Women in Western countries are adored, petted, made a mother and if they do not see eye to eye with their man, they are thrown on the streets, which is worse - animal behaviour!

Indian Scriptures

Indian scriptures provide variety, present spiritual truths in a variety of colourful ways.

In the Ramayana, God is Man.

In Mahabharata, Krishna is statesman or superman.

In Bhagavata, Krishna is super divine, God.

Purnamadah

Take a bar of gold - beat it into ornaments.

Out of the bar of gold they have come, as full as the bar of gold.

Even when the gold has been used up in ornaments, it is all there.

Ours

The earth is rotating on its own axis and revolving around the sun - all at terrific speeds!

We do not know - because we are part of the atmosphere the earth carries around with it.

Similarly, as this universe is a cell in the Body of God, we do not know - because we are a little particle, part of the total mystery.

An astronaut, as he was hurtling round the earth, wondered "what was keeping the earth there ... over his head".

To him it was securely kept, for him to re-enter.

Yet, the entire solar system itself may feverishly be moving, revolving or dropping.

We cannot know - perhaps we do not care, so long as the relative distance in 'our' solar system is not altered.

Dreams

I have "dreamed" dreams. I have had them materialise.

Unlike other people I was simultaneously aware of the dreamer and the materialised dream - instead of getting lost in it.

I have come out of the dream and I could see, this other side, too - again seeing simultaneously the dreamer, the dream come true, and the effect. It is like a tunnel - you pass through it, come out of the other side - it is hopeless!

But when the next one looks wonderful, it attracts you, because you do not objectively see the whole of the previous experience.

Species

Who said gold is incorruptible?

See how many hearts it has corrupted!

Mother and offspring are of different species?

Organ

Spiritual organisation is absurd.

By its very nature, it is organless.

When you beat it into the shape of organs, the spirit is dead matter.

Insult

What someone says is his opinion - who says it is an insult?

There is nothing called "bear insult"

It is 'give him the God-given gift of Freedom of Speech'.

It is already there.

Aparigraha

Freedom from Covetousness.

Aparigraha may logically be extended to include everything other than one's immediate personal needs - all else is expropriation.

Storing of grains is surely taking away what belongs to others.

Abandonment of private property is Aparigraha.

You plant sugarcane on farm and, as it grows, you cut it again and again because the farm belongs to you.

Are you justified?

All this is Parigraha or expropriation.

Contol

You have control over nature?

Yes? Then you are sitting on a bomb!

Even a madman throwing a cigarette stub can blow you!

Modern civilisation has given enormous power to Man - power without restraint.

Like a motorcar with an excellent accelerator but without brakes and steering.

Life and Death

The Sannyasi who thinks of the after-life does not think of "death".

In this life, he contemplates future life - eternal life.

He who lives only for this life, lives in death!

We should not tarry in negative - but jump to positive at once.

Good and Evil

Good and evil can never be absolutely solved.

Dr. Robinson reminds us in his book "Honest to God" that we should preach charity or love and let people practise it.

But that is not possible for all - and when two people's idea of charity - love differ, there will be chaos.

Hence there are:

(1) Penal Code, (2) Moral Code, (3) The Law of Charity, (4) The Absolute - beyond good and evil.

(1) Man is afraid of the policeman and tempted by social recognition.

(2) By hell and heaven - pointed out in Scriptures.

(3) He transcends them and like Jesus appears to violate penal laws and even prevailing religious traditions - expressing the Law of Charity.

(4) He goes beyond evil. But this is not the job of one life-time. It can go on - but we believe in continuing Life.

Indus Valley civilisation

I am always amused by expressions like "Even in those days ...", as if we are the most civilised and the course of culture is a straight line!

I am sure it is a circle.

The weapons mentioned in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are super nuclear weapons.

Left to itself, today's civilisation will destroy itself.

Shradda

Shradda is faith.

Shraddham is annual ceremony performed to strengthen faith in family tradition.

Grocers and assistants

Krishna and Christ are like grocers. They give their lists.

We are like the assistants - whether we start from the top, the bottom or the middle - if we carry on, we shall eventually do all.

Karma

Where is it recorded?

Unless prayer, penitence or balancing action reaches that depth, it will not wipe out that Karma.

Prayer

If you have earthly rewards, give them to your "enemies" - they will enjoy and perish sooner!

If you have heavenly rewards, give them to your friends - they deserve it.

I ask for only the privilege of praying to you, Oh Lord.

Desire and Pleasure

It is common knowledge to students of psychology that Desire or Craving, the Urge, is really a sensation of pain.

The second stage is the attainment of the desired object or experience.

Take drinking of beer for example. It is admitted that the first time, beer tasted bad - it was painful drinking it.

Beer has not changed, it is painful even now.

Second stage too, is pain.

But since habit has made the second stage, a relieving of the tension created by the first, it is associated or identified with the third stage - quiescence of mind - which is happiness.

Where is the Time Saved?

A clear example of mislaid (or waylaid) intention is the aeroplane.

Everyone tells us that modern means of transport saves our time and increases our leisure.

But have you noticed anyone walking leisurely to or at the airport to enjoy the saved time?

On the contrary, people rush to and airport - why did they save the time?

The only time they have to take it easy is in a traffic jam - but if only you know the speed with which their nerves and brain cells vibrate!

Renunciation

The Man of Renunciation is like Fire.

1. You can enjoy the warmth of his company.
2. You can purify yourself through the fire.
3. If you "play" with it, you can burn yourself.

Perception

Perception is not immediately correct.

At night I see the moon on the earth!

Has it fallen from the sky? No. It is reflected in water.

Perception does not imply truth you have to use reasoning too!

Foolishness

It is utter foolishness to try to destroy someone else.

As you dig his grave you have to get into it first!

Caste

Unity and Uniformity.

The animal kingdom has uniformity.

But in the human kingdom there is unity in diversity.

The donkey makes no distinction between sister and wife.

The human being knows that the two are different though they are both women.

He loves them both, though he expresses them differently and appropriately.

Man's intelligence is more evolved than the animal's - he has discrimination - which he should use wisely.

Because these differences bring about conflict, to demand uniformity is evading the issue.

The mischief is not in the caste system, religion or colour - but in the wicked human heart which misuses these distinctions.

If we do not transform the heart, even if you remove the caste system, religions, etc., the heart-in-man will discover other distinctions - e.g. nationality, occupation, to fight over.

Sarcasm

If man has gratitude, how shall we distinguish him from a dog?

The West and I

Sometime during the industrial revolution, the western layman lost his regard for both the (1) Christian cloistered mystic, and (2) Christian ordained priest. The former he rejected as an escapist, the latter - who mingled with the crowd and behaved as a human - he laughed at as imperfect. The layman felt he was better than either, and since they depended on him and he did not have to depend on them, he lost all regard for them. Egotism was the result.

Work

Working to live and living to work is a circle.
It does not satisfy me. I prefer to parallel.
I work to live - but I live to realise life.
I live to work, but I work that others may live.

Satire

Some people are not even interested in their salvation - all their life they spend in criticism of others, fault-finding and correcting the world - and one day they discover, they have to leave and go.

Traffic

When you listen to a discourse, do not think - let it be one-way traffic.
If there is two-way traffic, you may have a jam.
Too much strain - you may feel tired.

Kali

Sadasiva on whose breast She dances, nude and dark, is the static background of pure Chit - universal consciousness, white and inert, because pure Chit is Svaprakasha - Self luminous and Nishkriya - without movement. But apart from and beyond consciousness there can be nothing - hence the Divine Mother stands on the bosom of the Divine Father. The Mother Herself is all activity. Her nakedness means that, though She encompasses all, there is nothing to encompass Herself. Her darkness means that she is inscrutable.

Swearing with Blood

It is an ancient custom for warriors to write their oath of allegiance to the King with their blood.
Now they kill an ox and smear the King's tomb with its blood!

Law of Self-realisation

Bhag. XI-28,I-9.

The Self, which is beyond both good and evil, can be realised only if

1. You are good, and
2. You see no evil.

You cannot ignore the evil in your own heart - for it will compel you to see evil everywhere else!

If your own heart is good, you will not see evil at all .

In other words, if you see evil, your heart is impure, however holy you appear and pretend to be!

Free-Thinking

Before declaring oneself to be a free-thinker, and preaching the message of free-thinking, give that freedom to all!

Then perhaps you will keep quiet.

Selfishness

Where is it? If only knew, I would pluck it and throw it away!

It is like the bed-louse - invisible, subtle, most troublesome.

You think you have killed it, but it is very much alive - where you least expect it.

It is behind the mind and heart - serving as the outer covering of the soul itself.

It is the aroma of the ego. So long as you say "I" - it is.

Even in Samadhi - super-consciousness, it is only asleep.

Go on practising selfless service - purify the heart.

One day you will suddenly know "This is it" - at that moment you know God!

Karma

Both an effect and a challenge.

Even in politics it is clear understanding of Karma that can enable us to provide a peaceful solution to our problems and a constructive approach to administration.

Enlightenment

It is not as though on enlightenment, we become God!

We realise that we were never other than God!

It is like a millionaire, dreaming that he was a beggar.

On awakening he does not say: "I was a beggar and I have become rich".

He knows "I have never been a beggar" but "I have always been a millionaire."

Atomic Energy

"The nucleus is full of protons which are electrically positive and which ought therefore to repel one another with enormous force. Somehow these electrical forces are held in check - an unknown binding energy which we do not understand welds the protons and the neutrons into a single stable kernel"
There is an electrical attraction between the positive nucleus and the negative electrons.

Coiled power

"But this is a modest force, no more violent than that with which our sun holds the planets in their orbits. The greater energy lies like a coiled spring in the nucleus itself" - New World and Modern Science.

This is perhaps the basis of the Kundalini Yoga.

The word "coiled" is particularly significant: the Yogi believes that Kundalini is "coiled power".

Catalyst

"A substance that helps other substances to burn, without undergoing any change in itself" - Modern Science: "Chemistry's Secret Agents".

Such is the desire for God or for liberation.

It enables you to get rid of all worldly desires, but it has no need to undergo any change.

Trick

A blind suitor to a beautiful girl wanted to prove he could see well and so stuck a needle on a tree and pretended he could see it. He went to the tree, got back the needle.

But in his excitement and hurry, while returning, tripped over a cow - thus revealing to the girl that his eye sight was defective and that the needle business was a pre-arranged trick.

Threshold

Many are at the threshold between human and animal births.

They may either enter the human in the next or leave it and become animals.

Ravana

Illustrates the great truth that the Jiva - individual soul can descend and ascend the ladder of evolution.

There is an ever-present danger of a fall. There is an equally free opportunity of raising oneself. But this in no way affects the pure soul.

Name and Form

Only when the Sadhak - spiritual aspirant is practically able to deny the reality of the name and form attached to him, can he dispense with name and form ascribed to God.

When we are bound down to name and form every moment of our life, to reach out to the nameless, formless in the Reality, will be futile.

But all the same, we should remind ourselves of the Goal.

Maya

1. God is Omnipresent - that is the ultimate Truth.

Any concept that runs counter to it should be reconciled to it.

2. God's intelligence and power create and sustain all, even the atheist who denies God, even as your dream can create a robber of whom you are afraid.

3. The apparent diversity assumes reality.

Though the cause - Maya is unreal, the effect, diversity, is real.

Dream-robber is false, but not the shout, the palpitation and perspiration.

When this vanishes, we shall sympathise with the joys and sorrows of all.

If we are One, then your pain must be felt by me.

The Sun

Scientists proclaim that the sun is only a mass of burning gas and they pride themselves that they have exploded the myth that the sun is God.

They have truly understood what the sun is.

But they they have still to learn what God is.

Their declaration betrays their terrible ignorance of the nature of God.

Deva or divinity means the shining one - the sun.

Caste

I believe that the caste - the racial conflicts - are not so much religious or ethnic as political, social and economic conflicts.

Once inequalities in opportunity and status are removed, all concerned perceive not only the meaning but the need for division of labour based on talent - Guna) and occupation - Karma) that the caste system implied - and, though grudgingly, concede that these can even be inherited.

Ford's son is a Ford - the Queen's son is the future King.

The Fact that caste is termed Varna has no racial bearing.

The labourer who works in the sun most of the day is dark; the Kshatriya - warrior is ruddy; the sheltered Vaisya and Brahmin are light skinned - the austere Brahman becoming pale, and the rich Vaisya, rosy.

When you say that in the eyes of God there is no evil, how do you account for His incarnation to destroy evil?

God, being omniscient, knows our limitation and hence that we see evil. He comes to remove that - from our view.

Just as a Mother knows that a doll is not a child. But she knows, too, that her little daughter treats it as her baby, and so she gives her the doll.

Pure

The ocean is salty - it has been filled with the tears of miserable human beings.

The rainwater on the contrary is pure.

God

Even the descriptions of souls taking the paths of Light and Darkness may refer to Satva - purity and Tamas - inertia. The presence of fire is noticed by its own light - the Presence of God is realised in His own Light - Satva. Though the Jiva is God, in Tamas it forgets God - smoke will make even the man who made fire close his eyes - electric shock will kill the inventor himself.

Soma

Freshly pressed juice could not intoxicate - this English word is unfortunate!

"Toxic"- intoxicate - is to introduce some toxic matter into the system.

Soma invigorated the performer of the Yajna.

The Present

"I brought about the fourfold caste distinction; yet, I did not." - Gita.

God is responsible because it is "natural".

But He disowns authorship of man-made distinctions.; also, why a particular person belongs to a particular caste is determined by his own Guna and Karma.

God created work, situations and challenges - but man creates problems.

Work becomes problem post mortem - situation becomes problem post mortem.

You look forward to work. Work!

But do not look far ahead - you will not be able to concentrate on the present - and thus the opportunity will slip through your fingers and be transformed into worry.

Dharma

Dharma is never defeated.

Even God, out of His own Will submits to His Laws.

Hence even when Ravana was growing powerful, Narayana said: "His Time has not yet come".

He gives the wicked man times and chances to reform himself.

But Dharma relentlessly works to restore balance.

Energy

Hydrogen becomes helium - the energy is released when there is fusion.

Simple hydrogen becomes complicated helium.

This fusion goes on making for more and more complicated atomic structure.

At another place the atom disintegrates-fission-breaking up - leading down to the hydrogen again!

Nothing happens and yet a lot of energy is released!

The I

"Rain is caused by Yajna - fire worship". - Gita.

This is the simple law of combustion.

When fuel burns, the components of the fuel - carbon and hydrogen, combine oxygen and form carbon dioxide and water.

How does the brain think? Ponder this question.

You will realise that the brain cells are insentient - like a juice extractor which does not know the taste of the stuff it crushes.

The Brain is the tool of the mind.

The mind is changeful - as if someone else were in control.

Who? I - mind itself is the tool of the I.

Look at the I. It is not nothing. It is not insentient.

But it is only a reflection in the mind - hence, the confusion of the Omnipresent-scient-potent God.

In a way, therefore, you can say that the I also is a tool.

Avidya

Avidya is only ignorance masquerading as knowledge.

Doctors' theories change constantly; every time they say "This is it", they are still experimenting.

It is all ignorance.

Yet, it is necessary to enable us to live our worldly life, because that too is unstable and changing value.

Eternal value is unchanging

"Fire is Hot" - true at all times and circumstances.

The Statement "Coramine strengthens the heart" is not true - it can have no such effect on a dead body.

From one point to another point - a straight line?

Take a rope and stretch it long enough - it will curve because the earth is round.

Point of view

"One and only" is valid from one's own point of view.

If one looks from only that point, how does one know the other is wrong?

"All right" - is also from one point of view!

For, naturally one then recognises that the "one and only" view is also tight.

Thus the "all are right" man errs when he condemns the "one and only" man.

The latter is childish when he judges others!

If the "all are right" one avoids the others, it is not out of exclusiveness, but because of the sheer impossibility of an elephant being accommodated in a mouse-hole.

Sudra

Servant caste.

The danger of devotion without knowledge - a Brahmin does Japa - repetition of the Lord's Name and Puja - worship, and meditates on the Lord's Feet.

In the Purusha Suktha it is said that the Sudra emerged from His Feet.

Yet the Brahmin will drive the Sudra away - the Living Feet of the Lord while meditating on Them in his own heart.

Routine

When intelligently practised, routine spiritual practices help us greatly. They become like rivers of spiritual light.

We are not same any two days!

And hence the Sadhana assumes fresher significance every day.

On the contrary, if we give up Sadhana altogether, looking for something spectacular, our spiritual personality becomes stagnant.

And, like a stagnant pool of water, it does not stay in the same condition but soon becomes dirty and filthy.

Life cannot be stagnant.

Even spiritual practices can become monotonous, boring, and therefore unspiritual.

So be vigilant and try to feel the presence of God in everything you do.

Veda

Honestly, much of the Knowledge that the Veda constitutes has taken on a new garb.

Though we do insist that that Knowledge is eternal, we do not demand that it should always be carried on in its crystallised or rather fossilised state.

Dr. Radhakrishnan in his "Principal Upanishad" has compared the Bible with the Upanishad.

I personally feel that, in course of time, Christianity and even modern science will be integrated into the Hindu way of thinking.

This process of perpetual research does not mean that the original foundation is weak; but our religion demands that, in order to realise that the Reality, is Infinite, the Centre can be approached in innumerable ways and we should take a look at the same Reality from different angles.

That is the strength of our religion - Veda or Knowledge therefore includes and integrates all fundamental sciences.

Reincarnation

Our present incarnation is meant not only for paying off the debt we owe on account of past Karma, but also to evolve into Godhead.

The former is negative causation and the latter the positive approach where the exercise of freewill is vital.

Seminal energy

It is not impossible to equate the Kundalini with the seminal energy.

It is said that, whereas all other products of the inner organs of the body are meant for the use of one's body, the seminal energy is not.

It is meant for recreating a being powerful enough to perpetuate itself.

Here, we have the Kundalini which is described as the residual psychic or Pranic power, after what has been distributed among the various organs of the body: i.e., it is essentially the same, but the reservoir from which thousands of similar bodies could similarly be fed.

God's Will

Will is the Father - Mind is the Mother.

The Universe is the offspring - even in regard to our thoughts and dreams.

God's Will is truly God's Will.

Man in his limitation can never be really good; when his selfishness and ego are eradicated, what radiates from him as Goodwill is God's Will and irresistible.

It must fulfil itself.

Heredity

Here is Weismann's theory of "continuity of germ plasm".

The original germ-cell splits into two; one half gradually develops itself into the body of a plant or animal - this is the Lumah-cell; the other half remains encased in the body, practically unchanged, and is transmitted in the process of reproduction to the offspring, that is, the germ-plasm.

Now, this germ-plasm is unbroken through the whole line of propagation.

Karma

It is neither possible nor necessary to know our Karma.

No one can do anything to us unless it is our Karma.

Some say: "Foreknowledge will enable us to modify it: to make good use of even bad Karma".

True: if we always try to be good and do good, this modification will be automatic!

We do not carry over our neuroses from birth to birth.

We carry forward our tendencies, and we are thrown into certain circumstances by our Karma.

When we fail to adjust those tendencies into those circumstances, we create neuroses.

Guru and Disciple

Guru has knowledge - disciple asks for it.

The hand that asks must be lower - otherwise it will be difficult for the other to give.

Punishment

In the Puranas we hear God punishes.

He lovingly restrains us from further sin.

The sinful hand is paralysed - the sinful tongue has cancer - the evil eye is blinded!

Wisdom and worry do not go together!

If your wisdom cannot guide you, what is it?

Prayers

Why do our prayers fail?

Others may be praying against - they too, are His children!

Life

We often read that scientists say that in other planets life cannot exist, as we know of it.

I was sitting on the beach and a fish said to another: "Life, as we know it, cannot exist on land." How true and how false!

Genesis

God created dualities like night and day, heat and cold, etc., in this world.

But, we should leave these differences alone - they are meant for the evolution of other souls.

But the serpent of Bheda-Buddhi tempts us to make the discrimination ours - thereby falling into a trap and misappropriating the differences for our own selfish use.

We should crush this Bheda-Buddhi.

Rebirth

The individual subconscious is that part of the universal Mahar (intellect), which is illuminated by the individuality or ego.

The top layer is the conscious.

At death, there is submarine activity.

The ego dives into the unconscious and comes up elsewhere - so is unaware at the conscious level of either the previous incarnation's subconsciousness or conscious levels.

Karma

Obviously all the Karma is not allotted to one birth as Prarabdha - Karma determining present life.

For then a child dying at birth would obtain Moksha - liberation.

Only a portion is allotted to each birth.

Here is both intelligence and mercy - intelligence in the selection and mercy in so grouping the good and evil Karmas to be worked out that in no birth is there an excess of either pain or pleasure.

Degree

Read these two statements together - "Before Abraham was, I am." - "What I have done, ye can do."

The difference between Jesus and you is not one of nature, but of degree of perfection.

Even you were before Abraham - you were not created after your parents decided to have a baby!

Reincarnation

Take the case of a wristwatch - you replace the whole mechanism, part by part, over, say, over years.

Then you exchange the steel case for a golden one!

Now, it is not the watch you had six years ago - but you will not say so!

The idea is the same - even so the idea of the personality continues from childhood to old age and even when one body is exchanged for another.

I do not deny the genes - nor do I deny I am born of the sperm and the ova.

But what I assert is that I brought them together - they built a body for me.

If I did not do so, the particular sperm in company with millions of others would have been unlucky, and the ovum destroyed without fertilization.

They did not create me - nor did I create them and the body-life tabernacle.

They evolved for me to live and evolve.

Instrument

Though man is an instrument in His hand, His Will has to work through him!

Hence, little man deservedly shares God's glory.

Krishna readily admits this one.

Often we find this principle violated in human institutions.

The boss is the power behind all activities - but without the staff his ideas will be still-born.

The instrument must be glorified too, else, it is ingratitude and a disruptive influence.

Real

The Sage is awake. He is not aware of sin or sorrow.

Who is he going to serve or teach?

The son is asleep or delirious.

He shouts: "Father, there is the tiger!" But father does not shoot, He knows it is not real.

Body

The body is perishable; it can be preserved in health if through it we can gain the imperishable wisdom.

God

I do not want to realise a God Who is cowardly enough to hide in my heart alone.

I do not hold Him in my esteem if He only cares to dwell in the hearts of good people.

I adore Him who dares to dwell in my heart and in the hearts of all - good and bad.

Caste

Varna and Ashrama were like the warp and woof of cloth - one cannot stand without the other.

If Varna divided society, Ashrama united members of different castes who were all the same evolutionary level.

It removed the caste-stigma, while preserving the healthy features.

Fire

The Siva Lingam is a pillar of fire.

Fire has two qualities - heat and energy.

By pouring water on the Lingam, the devotee removes the heat aspect from the fire and keeps only the energy aspect.

Samsara

"Ocean of Samsara" - process of worldly life - is literally true.

The air is full of water vapour.

The earth is really floating in liquid.

The major part of the earth surface is water.

Even the body's primary component is water - every cell is literally swimming in water.

Illusion

When a picture is taken with the camera, the objects overlap one another, and there are only two dimensions.

When we look with the eyes, however, the picture has three dimensions.

The third: depth - space, is by the mind!

It is illusory - if it was real the camera will capture it, too.

With-out

Thoughts are forms of mind-substance, like pots are forms of clay.

When pots are broken, clay remains.

What remains when thoughts are broken?

World is not God. Body is not God.

The glass covering of the bulb is not electric light.

Yet, without it, the light will not burn.

Without body the soul cannot function and evolve.

Without the world, God's Powers cannot be revealed.

Desire

Visualise the ocean - it is Brahman - God.

Immerse a cloth bag-open-into it; it fills with water.

The water in it is

(1) Jiva when there is the possibility of the bag being lifted out of the water,

(2) Atman when it is just there.

What constitutes the possibility of this lifting? Karma and Desire.

Captains

When the ship is sinking, this is the Code of Honour: the weaker ones first, to be helped by the stronger ones - then the stronger ones - then the crew and the Captain.

Do likewise in this Samsara - do not pretend you can save the ship of the entire humanity.

You, the stronger ones, the enlightened ones, show the way to the weaker ones - then jump out of the sinking ship and save yourself.

The Buddhas and Jesus are like the Captains. Not you!

Philosophers

It is unfortunate that philosophers do not agree among themselves.

The "followers" do - they see outside, look to the philosopher concerned.

They accept what he gives, and since he gives the same to all of them, they agree.

But the philosopher questions the external version of the Reality and seeks within to contact It which is Infinite.

His own limited, conditioned, finite mind, however, is able to perceive the Infinite in a particular way - different from others' view.

Hence trouble!

Happiness

A child saw some fruits on the table and some within the cupboard.

Playfully it took the fruit on the table and threw it away - "There are fruits inside." - but soon discovered that there were none "inside".

It was only a reflection in the mirror.

Even so, man ignores God and busies him self with the joys of the world, soon to discover that they were never there except as a reflection or illusion.

Duty

We are not opposed to any religion - let each man walk his own path.

But the technique of Yoga can illumine his path and lead him a step forward.

Why do we not shed this light on his path and render this service?

It is our duty.

Meta-physics

The time has come to end all wordy warfare and meta-physical squabbles.

After physics, metaphysics.

True, everything up to the Ultimate can be covered in this specious "after".

But, we do recognise in the realm of metaphysics, the two distinct regions where two different laws operate - the lowlands of reason and the up country of intuition.

The climate is entirely different, and the wearing apparel, too.

If you go with the lowland costume - mind, logic and reasoning, into the upcountry of Revelation, you will catch cold!

Though modern (Einstein's) theories contradict and cancel the older (Newtonian) theories in physics, yet, the latter are effective in their own limited spheres.

In the same way, Gaudapada laughs at theories of creation and Karma which, however, operate in planes lower than absolute idealism.

Politics

Politics cannot unite mankind.

It implies a basic duality - one party - the ruling one, and the opposition - or the dictator and the dictated, the ruler and the ruled.

Religion: means unity - of man with God - All.

Politics today exploits the problems created by religious differences. Beware!

See God in all

But - what is "God"?

How do you explain "heat" - to the fish in the ocean or an Eskimo?

You take him near a stove and make him touch it - "That is heat".

Even so is Puja or meditation.

Inspiration

The Lord has promised to look after us when we constantly think of Him.

How does He do that?

By inspiring others to do their duty.

One man's duty is another's pleasure and security.

Fear

When not worrying about the past, you are worried about the distant future.

"A famine may come and I may not have food to eat" - you create the famine now and suffer.

Fear of disease creates it.

Fear of death kills you several times a day.

Might

Might is of no avail against Divine Right.

The strong man may frighten the police; the rich man may buy justice and legal proceedings and bribe all.

But neither has the least power against a small tuberculosis or cholera germ. The Divine asserts itself.

Need and Desire

What we need is little.

What we desire even God cannot satisfy.

Ravana had rulership over the world - also over the Gods in Heaven - and he wanted Parvati to be his wife.

Control

To control the mind is comparatively easy.

Fear of hell, the police, bad name, etc., keep us away from evil action.

But control of emotion is much more difficult.

Gita tells us how to convert all our emotion into devotion.

Past and Present

You cherish your father's wealth and not the inherited disease.

If you have inherited unhealthy customs too, shake them off.

Unity

Science unites the world positively and negatively.

Positively: the radio brings into your house the languages, culture and religions of all people.

Negatively: the atomic bomb threatens to unite all in the grave.

Desire

When through contact the object is thought of, it does stop there but gives rise to desire.

The photographer takes the picture - the negative in the camera is incomplete - it serves its purpose only when it is turned into positive - the picture.

The object of desire must be possessed.

That is the nature of desire!

Motive

In order not to slip into apathy, it is good to have a good selfish motive:

"I am doing this to go to Heaven" - then, "I am doing this to please God", - then, "I am doing this to purify my heart." - then, no motive!

What is the difference between verbal and visual anthropomorphism?

The Bible and Quran present a verbal anthropomorphism - and the Hindu makes it visual, in idols.

Misery

Misery is not so hard to bear as the desire to push it away!

When a motor-car stops for lack of fuel, the man in it is not affected so much - but the man who wants to push it, feels its weight.

When you try to push misery away, you feel its weight all the more!

Leave it alone and let it pass.