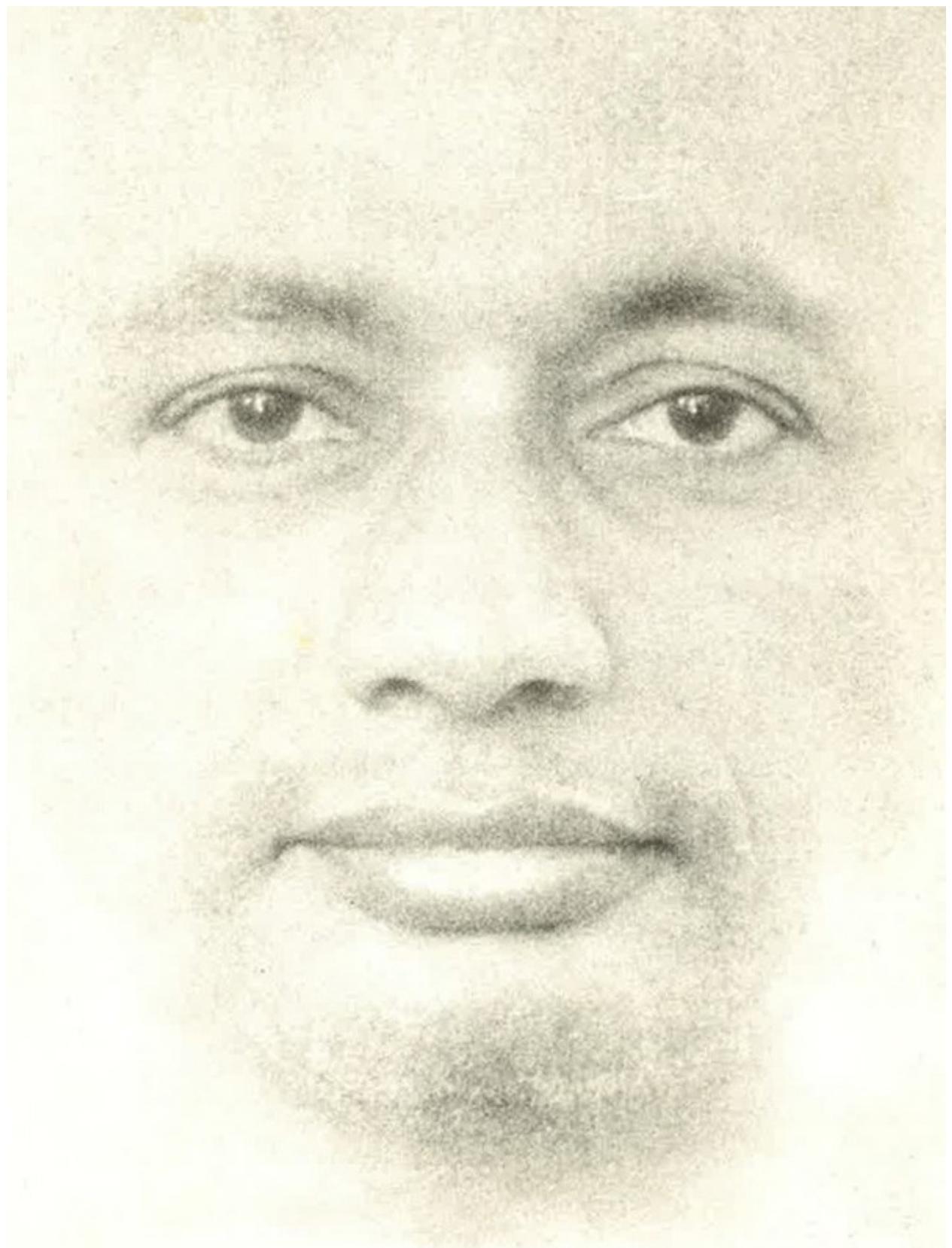


SENSE
ESSENCE
AND
NON-SENSE

VOLUME 2



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

Dis-interestedness

Interest means 'a profit which we desire, but do not deserve' - as when a usurer charges interest on a loan.

We should avoid this profit motive.

The body and the world

The body and the world are of the same substance.

And yet there is this apparent movement within the world.

It is like a stream inside the ocean.

The water of the stream is also ocean - but there is special activity.

Belief

What is the difference between one who believes in God and one who does not?

All believe in God from the Absolute view-point.

Some ignorantly and some are enlightened.

Enlightened approach to God

If you give me a small radio and I do not know what it is, I will not get the real benefit - which I would if I knew its real nature.

I will treat it as a toy.

Blind, ignorant faith in God makes a toy of Him.

The enlightened approach realises Him.

Value

Value governs our attitude towards things - and also what use we make of them.

A piece of cheap jewelry is displayed, but an expensive one is kept in the safe.

A few good men

Krishna and Christ could command the elements, but when it came to the human mind it was a different story.

Only the good men obeyed them. But, how few!

Control

Control of mind is more difficult than control of senses - the elements.

The way Dharma - Karma works

You may ignore it because of financial or physical strength.

Other people may be afraid of such strength.

But not a mosquito or a germ!

Your own hormones will respond only to the laws of Karma or Dharma which will inevitably overtake all your attempts to cheat them.

Maya and Avidya - Illusion and Ignorance

Maya: like a man who is in a dark room at night.

Avidya: like the man in the dark room also tying a bandage around his eyes.

Only Light can

You can remove the bandage, but not the darkness of the night. Only Light can.

Only the Light of God can remove Maya.

Identification

A tooth so long as it is in the mouth is identified with 'I'.

Any pain, pains me. But when it decays and falls - my tooth has fallen - identification is lost.

When the whole body dies, similarly, identification is lost.

You are distinct from the body.

I-surgery

Surgery realises that the 'I' or the soul is distinct from the body, and tries to protect the 'I' from a diseased or decaying body.

God can never be alone

For He has within Himself the potentiality of Infinite Manifestations.

He can multiply Himself a million fold in the mirror of His own

Consciousness, and what is more, He can play with them.

This is one way of viewing creation.

Egoless?

When we are asleep, we do not know 'I am asleep' - we do not know 'Now I have abandoned even dream, and I am asleep.'

Only a third party knows it.

In the same way, when we try to do self-surrender, we shall not be able to say 'I am egoless.'

Only God can know this.

Hence, Kathopanishad says: 'The Self reveals itself to him whom It chooses.'

Temple

Do we not refer to the sides of our head as 'temple'?

It is the Temple of the Indwelling Presence, the Light in us.

Duty

Can we alter our destiny?

Do not ask.

It is your duty to!

Do your duty.

Power of Satsang

Psychologists say that in the case of mass hysteria, the mass behaviour is worse than the behaviour of any individual in it.

This is like filth, when it is accumulated, it smells worse than each part of it. But Satsang is different.

There, the power is greater than that of any individual. Like light.

When many lamps burn, the cumulative effect is greater than the individual lamp.

When a Saint is present in the Satsang, He is comparable to the sun - all lamps merge their light in Him and He shines unquestionably superior to all.

Even if a few candles are blown out, darkness is not created!

Even the presence of wicked souls does not mar the Satsang.

Morality in His eyes

What is usually known as bad morality may not be so in His eyes.

And, what society sanctions as good - profiteering, luxurious living, vanity, may be really bad, in His eyes.

Perception

World is not unreal like the fifth son of a barren woman.

It is an illusion like water in a mirage.

There is some reality, falsely perceived.

I I I

Take some rain-water, in one porcelain cup.

Take some rain-water in a metal cup.

Rain water in both - it is the same.

I refer to myself as 'I'.

You refer to yourself as 'I'.

He refers to himself as 'I'.

I I I - it is all the same.

Differences of caste, creed, race or religion are unreal.

Sometimes Good, Sometimes Evil

God is infinitely good.

But we can appreciate it only from the Infinite point of view.

When we look at His will from the finite human standpoint, it looks sometimes good, sometimes evil!

All That is Better

We think God is up in the sky because:

(1) It is open and the earth is net,

(2) He is alive and not buried, and

(3) He is higher, Above, Greater, Nobler, Grandeur, Divine,
all that is better than what we conceive of.

Conflict

Ideological conflict is good. It is human.

Physical conflict - war is sub-human, though it is a fact of existence - necessary or unnecessary.

But conflict with modern weapons is sub-animal.

It is animal nature plus cowardice.

You do not even face the enemy - you kill him from a hiding place!

An animal would be ashamed to do that.

Man and Saint

There are electrons in a chair, too.

But why do only electrons flowing through a copper wire have the power to illumine?

Because, they are free.

The electrons in the chair are rigidly bound in the atom.

The bound soul is Man.

The free soul is Saint.

Psychic Power

Clairvoyance - a French word, simply meaning - clear-sighted, shrewd.

Why is it corrupted to an abnormal meaning?

We should stick to the simple French meaning.

God's Grace

What more do you want?

He has already given Himself away in the primordial supreme sacrifice!

The universe is His Grace.

His Grace fills the universe as His omnipresence.

His Grace manifests in us as spiritual aspiration.

It is for us to open our eyes and accept His Grace.

Understanding

When you stand under, you see greatly magnified.

You look up to - you try to grasp - and if you cannot, even then you understand and go away.

Perhaps you will never say, 'It is wrong,' but only 'I cannot grasp it, though I understand.'

Pain

Pain is truly blessing in disguise.

I feel pain only because I am alive! A corpse does not feel pain!

Pain is a signal – treat the cause.

Symbolism of the Holy Cross

The vertical bar tells us that God is not only beyond the - height - of our intuitive flights, but in the - depths - of our innermost being.

The horizontal bar tells us that God is in the man on our - right - side whom we like and admire, but also in him whom we have - left - behind as hopeless and useless.

Vision

Who wants to see visions?

If God is the Inner Reality, what or whom does He want to see outside Himself?

God can and sometimes does dream - and these are called psychic visions. But they are grasped and later interpreted by the ego and the mind - thereby they are vitiated.

Why ... not

In the case of transcendental questions like the illusions of the world - perception - the law of Karma - etc., the intellect cannot prove them.

But can you offer a logical explanation of the negation of the Vedantic theory - and what is the alternative?

If you cannot disprove the Law of Karma, accept it for its moral value.

The answer to why is why not.

Healing

Why do you dictate or demonstrate?

Unless you are in doubt you will not want to demonstrate.

Does His power and Glory depend upon your demonstration?

Surely God's Will must be good, without pain or disease, says my friend.

I reply: God's Will 'is' good, not 'must be' good.

Do you know that God regards something as pain?

To you it is pain.

Who are you to dictate to Him what good means?

Turn within and live in God.

I want to be ...

'I am not what I want to be ...'

How do you know what you want to be?

If you are not in the refrigerator, you will not know how cold it is!

You are what you want to be, already.

Because of the opening and closing of the refrigerator door, that inner state is disturbed.

Identifying yourself with the distraction, you feel you are not what you want to be.

That is all.

I made a mistake

It would be a mistake not to make it if it was necessary.

I realised that it would be a mistake if I did not realise it was a mistake.

Relax! All is well.

Real

'The Real ceaseth not to be; the unreal has no existence' - Gita.

It is the basic principle of spiritual healing.

But it cannot be applied when we are still clinging to the reality of falsehood.

The soul is real - the world, disease, pain, body etc., are unreal.

This means: get rid of the idea of disease.

If you have done that, you will not feel it, even if it exists in the eyes of others.

Understanding is spiritual atonement.

Tolerance stands on top and looks down.

Love stands on equal footing and fraternises.

Understanding stands under - bearing the whole weight, looking up in humility, capable of only looking through the other.

Tension-appeasement-release

This is the process of sense-pleasure.

The Bliss of the Self is hidden beneath the veil of ignorance - hence the pleasure hunt commences and concludes above this veil.

Only when this is calmed does one go deeper and discover the fountain of Bliss.

Beware of the Saviour

The Saviour enslaves.

We save ourselves from sin, by virtue - but virtue binds us, and the bondage leads to sin eventually.

Normal

Who can say whether I am normal or not?

To my own maker, I am normal.

There is not just one single pattern of human behaviour.

There is not just one pattern of animal behaviour - the tiger is normal, so is a cow.

Let all express their own selves.

Protect society as you protect humans from tigers - by suitable moral laws.

There will be less tension caused by everyone trying to fit into someone else's 'normal'-jacket.

Expansion and contraction

Expanding universe must also contract.

This expansion and contraction in relation to eternity is as good as 'continuous creation'.

When you throw a stone in water, waves go out in concentric circles; but after a while it all fills up.

Thus are the two theories of astronomers, viz., 'continuous creation' theory and the 'expanding universe' theory reconciled.

Know thy self!

The 'I' is the measure with which we measure all else.

If the weighing scale is not set properly, it only give us a wrong reading!

Know thy self!

Three Planes, and your duty in relation to them.

(1) Law of Karma - cause and effect. Endure and ignore the unpleasant effects and build a better future by present right action.

(2) Law of Grace. Pray. Know that Grace can nullify Karma. But, accept what happens as Grace.

(3) Law of Nirvana or Christ Consciousness. The Reality alone exists - without a shadow, illness or imperfection. Rise above body or world-consciousness. Forget them.

To say God's Grace can do and undo and command its obedience is foolishness.

To stand on Christ Consciousness and look for health and worldly prosperity is the height of stupidity.

Do not confuse the three states.

Concentrated in mind

Seek and go on seeking for the Truth, without letting any 'label' stop you.

Only let two rules govern your seeking:

(1) Keep an open mind! God is not confined to any concept, and yet 'is' in all!

(2) While listening to all, do not be carried away by any or distracted. Be 'concentrated' in mind.

His ear-wax

Without the so-called evil, creation is not complete!

God did not create evil - but evil was born of God Â His ear-wax - beautifully illustrated in the first chapter of Durga Saptashati.

Sat-Chit

There is insatiable thirst for knowledge.

'Why did God create the world?' - we ask, even after knowing that the mind cannot conceive of the answer.

We want Perfect Knowledge.

Half-knowledge is worse than ignorance.

Perfect knowledge is of something that 'is' - Sat-Chit.

Such knowledge gives us Bliss.

Matter

The physical, astral (subtle) and causal bodies Â everything from the ego-principle down to the tip of the finger - are matter in various states of grossness.

Therefore they react and are acted upon by the world of matter.

But the Self, the Image of God is unaffected by them.

Omnipresence

It is easier to feel the inner presence than the omnipresence.

When the mind flows out, it is excited by the glamour of the object.

Once we have learned to feel the Indwelling Presence, we can feel the Omnipresence.

Samsara

Evolution-Revolution-Dissolution.

This is the Eternal process known as Samsara.

Look at Creation

It teaches you to not accumulate your worries.

God has introduced nights between days to break the tension.

You can follow this cue by meditation and, after each act, disconnect yourself from the world.

Soul and body

(1) The Soul is Immortal.

(2) Ignorance identifies 'soul' with 'body'.

The two together produce attachment to life and body.

Discrimination

Even with discrimination one has to be careful.

It has its light and dark sides.

When the bright side is up, it says, 'Spiritual life is more worthy'.

But the dark side comes up, and says, 'It is difficult'.

Strike while the bright side is up.

The natural and inevitable

There are some who feel that since a perfect soul dwells in the human body, the latter should be perfect, till the soul leaves it.

We do not like to discard even a reasonably new suit.

Perhaps even God does not like the idea of throwing away a fresh body.

The experience of wearing an old body is also essential.

Why are we worried over the natural and inevitable?

Double morality

There is something seriously wrong with double morality.

You cannot say 'I love you at home - but I must hate you when I meet you in the market.'

If the love is there, it is always there.

If it is there in the market, it was there at home too.

You were cheating yourself or at least others!

The aim is lost

(1) Two dogs fight for a piece of meat. Meat is forgotten, fight continues.

(2) Man toils for leading a comfortable life. Toil becomes a habit, comfort is never had.

(3) A woman wants to save household work - buys machines - takes up a job to pay for them - sweeps the shop, instead of home.

(4) Man earns to provide for his wife and children, but is angry if they spend.

(5) Spiritual institutions lose their spirit.

(6) Workers - congressmen and communists, fight for equal distribution of wealth, but create their own wealthy class.

(7) People have wooden flooring, a carpet to cover it, a rug to protect the carpet, and neck with wooden sandals on top.

Normalcy

What havoc has been caused by some psychologists' definition of 'normalcy'!

Therefore the abnormal is seen in the growing tension in the hearts of millions of people who are normal and yet not so according to the psychologists' standards.

It is time to tell all that all are normal, as God made them. If nothing else, it will tranquilise them.

Do you wish to improve their IQ? Then tell them, 'You are all right, but can be even better.' Then they will work and not worry.

Time

Day and night are concepts of the mind.

But is there any movement or passing of time?

It is a circle - and the circle is completed every day.

We return to the starting point every day.

'Passing' of time is only an idea.

The World as He knows

The world that we know of is perhaps full of evil, because the instrument of that knowledge - the mind, is evil.

But, we should derive great consolation from the fact that the world that we know of is not the world that 'is', i.e., the world that God made, saw it was good and knows of.

When we raise ours to God-consciousness, then we shall know the world as He knows it, and find it is good.

Deeper is 'I'

The world of elements reacts on 'my skin' also the product of elements.

The skin - the outer sense organs, reacts on 'my brain' also the subtle part of the elements.

But still deeper is 'I' - it is not the world, the senses or the mind, but deeper within.

To that 'I' everything is external.

I - me

All these are within 'me'.

When you say this, do not point to your own chest!

This refers to the Infinite 'I'.

The Beginning

Is it necessary to regress in evolution, to the Beginning, in order to realise God?

The circle

No! You can go forward - and complete the circle!

You will arrive at the starting point.

Faith

When we strive, we achieve nothing, and when we become desperate and all but give up, the solution drops from nowhere.

That is what the Gita says. The Giver of everything is God.

When we 'strive', the ego is too fat to let the sunlight of His Grace flow through the window of our life.

In despair, we slay this fat ego and immediately discover that the sunlight was there all the time.

I have had this experience so often that now I have become a desperate hopeless live-er .

I always sail in the clouds - and find that the modern man does so too with his aeroplanes.

If he has faith in machine, I have faith in God.

Hope works

People think that to be hopeless is negative.

No! It is highly positive.

We abandon hope because we want to let Him take over positively.

But we do not abandon our duty or life; we are dynamic and active because we feel it is His Will.

It is something funny, perhaps unscientific, but it works.

Thank God

After a period of intense communion, always offer a prayer for the sick etc.

If you have meditated upon the oneness, feeling that you are one with all, then the prayer will be immediately fruitful - though you should not anticipate the result.

Before getting up, thank God for the gift of human birth, intense longing for liberation, and opportunities of spiritual practice.

Nothing Takes Place

Take your hair. You have cut it, 1 at a time, a thousand times. But if you had not, it would not have grown 1000!

Nature replaces what has apparently been destroyed.

Or, in other words, there is a continuous process of destruction - construction. Means nothing.

We see construction - the upward curve or destruction - the downward curve only because of our limited vision.

If we can perceive it as a whole, we shall realise it 'is'.

Birth, death, seed, plant, are not illusory, but partial, limited, and so un-real views of the Reality.

Disinterested benevolence

Some foolish psychologists believe that unselfish and disinterested action is impossible.

Some good men concede that disinterested malevolence is possible, as in the case of the police and the magistrate, or the warrior.

But in our own times Mahatma Gandhi and Gurudev Sivananda have proved that disinterested benevolence is also possible, good, and a state which we should strive for, in order that we may attain the Absolute.

See evil

Evil is both within and without, just as the light is in the eye and outside.

When it is dark you cannot see.

Even when the sun shines you do not see - if you are blind.

The chemistry of evil

'But,' questions the friend, 'It is said that the world that God created is good and that the soul of man is good, too. How come evil?'

It is like precipitation in chemistry: two liquids are perfectly clear; but when they are mixed, a precipitate or sediment is formed.

The world of elements is good. Man is essentially good, too.

But during the course of their interaction, on account of the clashing and the conflict of different ambitions of different people - which may all be good in themselves, evil is generated.

Dirt is matter out of its proper place.

Similarly, evil is behaviour that is out of place, unbecoming.

A tiger can kill a lamb, but man doing so is evil.

Religion vs. Mysticism

In all religions there has always been the problem of presenting its basic tenets to the masses.

This had to be done through rituals. This satisfied them.

But it did not satisfy a few mystic-minded ones.

They broke away and became the Yogis, Sufis, or Mystics.

They are integral parts of their religion, not renegades.

Conception of God

God as Concrete Form - God as Indwelling Spirit - God as Abstract Idea - God as Transcendental Reality - the Four stages to the Truth.

The diversity and the idolatry arise out of the very title of this symposium, conception of God.

The idol can be compared to the flag of a nation.

The tailor can stand on it as he makes it; but once it is hoisted, it is high treason to trample upon it.

It unites people, lifts their hearts to higher idealism, inspires them to great acts of sacrifice and devotion.

'Conception of God' - who is to conceive whom? Is God then my baby that I could conceive Him?

Yet, the finite human intellect has always attempted it - with the understandable consequence of a diversity. Diversity is not unwelcome even in the realm of the conception of God.

That is perhaps our best answer to His own diverse creation: He created through His own illusory power this world of diversity; and the human intellect, one of the evolutes, creates in its turn diversity in its conception of its own maker.

There is no harm in it. I shall not pray for uniformity, but only for unity. Unity is born of understanding.

There need never be one Religion in this world. Each man shall have one religion - and when he sees his brother following some other scripture or

worshipping God differently - he shall understand that both are worshipping the one God in their own way.

Uniformity might lead us to absurd conclusions.

A few years later there may be a conference in which cats and elephants might take part and resolve that since they and we are all living things, we human beings should begin to grow tails so that there may be one race of living creatures in this world.

Let us promote understanding towards unity.

Practical wisdom

To approach God in affliction and for wealth is practical wisdom.

Pain

Real pain is 5 per cent. Imaginary pain is 95 per cent.

When we pray for relief from suffering, the 95 per cent imaginary pain disappears - and God may direct us to go to a doctor for the cure of the 5 per cent.

Wealth

We do not need as much as we desire.

When we pray to God, the desire will disappear and He will guide us to fulfil the need.

Truth

Krishna says: 'Your speech must be truthful, pleasant and beneficent'.

Elsewhere, it has been said: 'Few people utter or listen to unpleasant truth', almost hinting that such cautioning is a virtue.

Some feel that this sanctions unkind truth. They say if a bitter medicine is needed to cure we must give it. No. Only if the other man is willing to take it.

If the other person is willing to accept unpleasant truth, you may give. Else, it will not serve its purpose, but will have contrary result: he will not listen to you, but will fight back, resulting in all-round unpleasantness and sin.

Coconut Symbolism

Coconut - (1) we give water at the foot of the tree, it converts into sweet drink and gives it with the bead. This is ideal Karma Yoga.

Yoga - (2) is a hard nut to crack, but the fruit is great. The first fruit is purity - the meat of the coconut is white.

(3) It is covered by a lot of fibre. When fibre is removed, we see 3 spines and 3 eyes.

This is Jnana Yoga - the soul is covered by Avidya - ignorance. Remove it. You will see the 3 states of consciousness or bodies and also 3 eyes of intuition to see them.

Caste

The caste system and the Karma theory seem to imply that all are not born equal.

But the choice and the qualification are offered to all.

The unclean man can and should elevate himself to a good man - and if he does, he is accepted in higher society - even as the fallen Brahmin will be shunned.

The native inequality is not unalterably rigid.

Understand the underlying truth

It is quite understandable that each man will have his own religion, his own scripture, his own deity and his own preceptor, even as he has his own mother.

There is no harm in his believing that his is the only one.

In the Holy Bible, Jesus says, 'I am the Way and no one cometh unto the Father, except through Me.'

Similar statements are found in the teachings of Lord Krishna in the Gita. Read the two together, you have the Truth, that Jesus and Krishna spoke for God Who in fact They were.

We cannot follow all the religions, and there is no need to cut them all to uniform size.

What we need is understanding of the unity underlying this diversity.

'Think of Me constantly.' (Gita)

This has been much misunderstood.

There are some who advocate pure worship or repetition of the Name of the Lord without taking any interest in society and its welfare.

That is possible and permissible only to those who do not depend upon society for their livelihood.

So long as you let people feed this body, so long shall you let that body serve the people.

Burden on earth

Man - when he lives, is a burden on earth, heavy and troublesome - building houses, running and eating etc.

When he dies, he is no longer a burden; but he is absorbed by the earth to which he contributes some minerals.

If he, while alive, leads a good life - in his loving service lifts the burden of sorrows of others - it is worth it.

Else, he is a dead-weight - hence, the popular expression 'burden on earth'.

The good people are like the aeroplanes which, though heavy itself, are capable of taking itself and more weight off the earth.

Seed and evolution

The seed contains the tree in miniature, to reproduce itself.

But evolutionists tell us that the species do not merely perpetuate itself, but constantly adapts itself to changing environment.

Thus, the seed also contains intelligence which will not mechanically enlarge into a tree, but intelligently adapt itself to changes in the environment that might have taken place during the germination.

The last generation of mosquitoes died of pesticides, the present one feeds on it.

Radio-waves

In the Infinite everything becomes infinite.

Only the man speaks or sings at one broadcasting station, but the waves do not just travel in one beam to be received in one receiver. Infinite receivers can receive the waves, which now have become many - infinite - each fully reflecting the original.

Our best

We do not say that we do not know anything. That would be hypocrisy.

We try to explain creation as best as we can.

Then, when we come to the final stage Â why God created the world, etc., - we say, 'I do not know'.

Reincarnation

'Life' - vol 36 - nr 9 - says that witches believed in reincarnation.

This may be one of the reasons why Christians refused to accept reincarnation, stating that 'all the witches believed in must go'.

The witches also believed that the symbolism is not to be intellectualised but realised directly by the initiate.

Atomic bomb and India

I fully believe that the Ramayana and Mahabharata ended in Atomic wars. What about fall-out dangers?

Excellent! Perhaps it was the radioactive fallout that reduced the life-span of the Indian - shortened his height and robbed him of his intelligence.

Don't laugh - it might happen in other parts of the world this time.

See God in all

You cannot recognise God until your heart is purified.

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

Duty and Service

When a nurse and a doctor serve the sick, it is their duty, for which they are paid.

They earn no special merit. If they neglect it, they incur sin.

If one who is not a nurse or a doctor does not feel inclined to serve, he does not incur sin - only he is hard-hearted. If he does serve, he earns great merit.

Saints renounce

Saints renounce the world to show us that there is no real happiness in this world and also that for the purpose of living we need very little.

They point out that our dinner table contains more ornaments and art collections, and less of food.

Maya

If we are dream images of God, how is it we act independently?

It is possible. We dream. The dream-objects are our own mind-stuff, within us.

Yet, they have the power to disturb us! They seem to have independent power!

This inexplicable power which enables the Jiva - His dream-picture, to assume independence is called Maya - Cosmic Illusion.

Mother and offspring

By the offspring you can tell the species of the mother, even if she is not before you.

If the offspring is calf, the mother is cow; if the offspring is a puppy, the mother is a bitch; if the offspring is human, the mother is a woman.

Similarly, if an act of enjoyment gives birth to pain land misery, it was not enjoyment, but pain (the womb of pain) only.

Karma Yoga

Deep sleep gives clue to happiness when two conditions are achieved:

(1) world is forgotten (2) the self is also forgotten.

Through Karma Yoga:

(1) world is forgotten when we see God in all.

Namdev took ghee to a dog which took his bread.

Be thankful to him who gives you the chance to serve.

(2) self is forgotten.

Unselfishness is the solution to all problem.

It removes profit motive which causes friction, at home, in society, nation and world.

Good and evil

So long as you are tied to the 'now' and 'here', you cannot understand what is good and what is evil.

A man standing on the edge of a big pit is puzzled and worried.

Who or what - a big bomb?, created this disaster?

But when he flies aloft, he sees that engineers have dug that earth in order to build a dam nearby.

Take a Cosmic view of everything.

Be in tune with the Infinite, through fasting and prayer.

You will understand everything.

Reincarnation

Are we merely confusing the words, 'resurrection' and 'reincarnation' and then fighting over imaginary differences.

There may really be no difference at all.

Dis-ease

Turning away from God is disease.

Who turns to God is at perfect ease within.

Religion

Q. If Religion is the one great unifying factor, then why are there so many different Religions quarelling with another?

A. Because, Religion in the case of these people is not the guiding aspect of their own heart, but is rather guided by their lower animal nature.

In fact, with them Religion is just another tool for the animal to use.

Q. How can you accept that the man who denies the existence of God, the man who believes in the Spirits as Gods, the man who worships the Highest God, are all 'religious'?

A. They are all on different planes of evolution.

We merely point out that there should be progress, no stagnation, though we allow one to believe in his own faith or creed.

Wealth

The poor man gets the sympathy and help of many. They are all his friends indeed.

The rich man, on the contrary, is the object of jealousy and envy. All people want to deprive him of his money - even they who make this desire look like respect and anxiety to help.

His wealth only creates enmity all around him.

It is better to be poor and surround ourselves with friends.

Meat-eating

Though meat-eating is regarded as Asuric, Mahabarata says even a butcher can attain salvation.

The Rishis were not blind to prevailing customs.

They said: 'Do not fight - love one another'.

But, when they knew the animal in man wanted to wage war, they prescribed rules of warfare!

Butchery and meat-eating bear the same relationship as war and murder. The former is legalised, the latter is illegal.

Even if the butcher eats meat, he is far from salvation!

God vs Money

God provides man with all that he needs, without his asking.

But man craves for something more; which he feels God may not approve of.

Like a child who goes to its mother when it is hungry, but steals money from his father's purse for cigarettes, man runs after money to fulfil his unholy desires.

Sooner or later, he finds that money, which can buy anything for him, is not capable of giving him happiness and peace.

That is God's 'safety device' to bring man back to Himself.

The trainer gives his monkey 'freedom' to dance, but all the time the monkey is chained to his hand.

The moment he wants to get it back to him, he pulls the chain and it returns.

That chain is pain, illness.

Raja Yoga

It is the consciousness or Atma within that illuminates everything:

(1) in the waking state, it illuminates the world

(2) in the dream state it illuminates the dream objects

(3) when the mind is full of Vrittis - thought waves, it illuminates the Vrittis - hence we are not conscious of It being there, but only when thoughts, feelings, and sense-perceptions are absent - Yoga Samadhi - does it shine as Itself.

Guru Worship

If the aspirant worships the Guru, may he not then forget God?

No, Guru is only the fullest and more faithful reflection of God.

Who will forget his own face, however much he looks at admires his face in the mirror?

God and Lightning

When we say that lightning is the work of the Gods, echoed in the Bible: 'Behold, he scatters the lightning about Him.' - Job. 36, you answer, 'But we know scientifically how lightning is caused'.

True, we do not deny your physical analysis. But ... when I lift my hand, it is possible to give a physiological explanation - which muscles contracted and which stretched and how the hand was raised.

But do not forget that the muscles obeyed the command of 'my intelligence'.

Similarly in nature - God's Body, everything takes place guided and governed by His Intelligence.

Science and Religion are thus reconciled.

Motorist and Fatalist

A good motorist has a sweeping view of the front.

He sees the entire road ahead.

Similarly, a good man sees not only what is immediately expedient, but what is ultimately good - for the entire life, from now till he reaches God, for several births.

Mystics and Philosophers

Philosophers are necessary to interpret the mystic wisdom of sages.

But these philosophers are like the waiters in a hotel.

If one is inefficient and makes a mess of your lunch, dismiss him - but do not go away without your lunch.

Go to the source and get your food.

Even so, go back to the mystics and to the fountain-source of religion.

It is foolish to renounce religion because philosophers differ and are confused.

Namesake

This word has perhaps originated in an expression like this: 'Please help him (someone who has your own name) at least for his name's sake.'

The help part of it has dropped in course of time and the two words have become one.

Weddings and Festivals

Festivals teach us a lesson - even as wedding teaches the couple the lesson that they are man and wife.

The lessons should not be forgotten the next day!

It must always keep company with us; even as the couple stay man and wife for life.

Brahmamuhurtha

The night is divided into four quarters, each to correspond with one of the 4 states of consciousness.

The 4th - 3 a.m. to 6, corresponds to Turiya - super-conscious state.

He who is awake to the Atman then, attains the Turiya.

On Sivaratri day we are asked to do Puja even during the 3rd quarter - if we are 'awake to the self during the deep sleep state' we shall realise God.

Doing kirtan and Japa half-sleepily is also good; for then, the impressions reach the subconscious mind.

Nature

Why can a dog bark and not you?

Because it is dog's nature and not my nature!

That is the proper use of the word 'nature'.

Hanuman

We are told that he was the son of wind; and that when the demons tried, they could not bind him.

This clearly proves Hanuman represents the mind.

Hanuman had limitless powers, but he had to be reminded - because he himself was ignorant of it.

Such is the case with the mind, too.

Mind has the Lord's power behind it - if only it will know, realise, by removing ignorance.

In the meantime, like a monkey Hanuman, the mind jumps here and there, very difficult to restrain.

Hanuman became world famous, as a servant of Rama.

Our own mind, if put to the service of the Lord, can be full of power, glory and divinity.

Prasad

Holy Sacrament.

People fell into great misfortune when they neglected the Prasad, says the Satyanarayana Katha.

We have our daily dose of God's Prasad - so many blessings - a beautiful day to live, healthy body, food, clothing, shelter.

Let us accept them and be thankful to God for them, instead of going on grumbling about what we do not have.

Think of the lame, the blind, the starving etc.,

Be thankful to God for what he has given you and glorify the Prasad.

Religion vs Science

Starvation, poverty and human suffering are not caused by religion - offering ghee and other foodstuffs, into fire, etc., but by wars 'brought on by modern civilization.

The 'Knowledge' - vol 3, no 36, tells us: 'In the last war 40 million Europeans died and over 100 million were living only just above starvation level.'

Money was not spent and foodstuffs were not poured in sacrificial fire, but in the holocaust created by politics, aided and abetted by science.

Idol

God is in the idol.

But, God is not only in - confined to the idol.

Question the Scientist

When it comes to Religion and God, people always ask 'Why' and the tame preacher takes it lying down.

When a man dies in an accident, we say it is Karma.

He says, 'Nonsense, the car collided, and he died.

Why: they went out of control.

Why: the roads were wet with rain; it rained last night; there were clouds.

Why! and why were only those two cars involved?

To one he would say 'nature' - which means God's nature, and to the other 'accident' - which only means 'I do not know.'

The sage knows and has the right answer: karma.

All Religions are Universal

There cannot be any religion called 'Universal Religion'!

If the disharmonious elements which have mostly been maliciously introduced into the pure fabric of any religion, are kept away, we shall immediately have the Universal Religion called Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity' etc.

No Reincarnation

Perhaps, yes.

For the Self - soul is not born, nor does it die.

It is the body that dies and there is no rebirth for 'that' body.

We make ourselves a new suit, as soon as the present one is discarded.

Flame in Worship

Hindus and devout Christians use it.

Flame always goes up - our mind should always go up, to God.

Flame - fire is the element that stands between the gross and the subtle. It is independent of external agents, not like electricity which can have power failure.

It teaches us how to steady the mind.

Keep the wind of desire out, shut the doors of senses.

Oil, wick and spark must come together to light the lamp: oil is good samskaras, wick is Yoga Sadhana and Guru's Upadesha is the spark.

Then the lamp will burn.

'Burning desire for God' - means steady desire to reach out to God - not spasmodic.

'Light' is necessary to dispel darkness.

We always light up the altar - keeping the room dark, suggesting that in us God should shine and the world should be dark.

People and Philosophy

Every great scientific truth goes through three stages.

First, people say it conflicts with the Bible.

Next, they say it has been discovered before.

Lastly, they say they have always believed it.

Agassiz - Naturalist and Author, quoted in 'Science and Health' by Mary Baker Eddy.

Instruct

Instruct is to put up a structure, in-side.

It is no use pouring your instructions into unwilling ears.

You have to get within them, win their confidence and love, and put up a structure there, of the ideal that you hold dear to yourself.

That is instruction.

Holy Customs

Lord Jesus justified the use of expensive oil with which he was anointed.

'The poor ye shall always have, but not me.'

He also washed the feet of His own disciples - and commanded His disciples and followers to do likewise.

Why do we criticise one another for these holy customs?

Karma in the Bible

The first indication of the acceptance of the Karma theory is found in the Genesis itself where God curses Cain for having murdered his brother. 'Since you have let the blood of your brother flow into the earth, the earth will not yield its fruit to you.'

It is not God's curse, but the operation of an inexorable law of cause and effect.

Reincarnation

The soul is not the body.

'I am not buried at death, but the body is.'

If the body is 'I', then the man who has no legs and hands would be a 'half-soul'!

They say on Doomsday, when the angel sounds the trumpet, the skeletons will be clothed in flesh and come to life.

We say, God who can create the flesh can create the bones also - and give us a new body - i. e. re incarnation.

I had a child body - it changed - I had a boyhood body, youthful body, etc. and they changed.

The body can grow and shrink - it is only 'handful of ashes', after cremation.

The limbs are not mine really.

When there is septic abces and the hand is cut off, I want it to be thrown away! It belongs to the dogs and vultures.

The real 'I' is Immortal.

Gita - The mother

Like the Mother, Gita allows us to wake on our own, helping us when we are in trouble.

Gita allows us to climb the staircase of Yoga - if we reach a crisis and can neither go up nor come down, then we should, like a child, sit down and cry - pray. Krishna says: 'In your previous animal births, you were guided by instincts I placed in you. Now, you are my own image. You have Intelligence. Do as you please.'

Gita

Prayer, God, does not always remove our trouble.

Krishna did not remove Arjuna's trouble - war, but enlightened his intellect.

If our troubles are removed, we will become slaves, animals.

God's Grace comes into us as enlightenment - and we shall never blame Him for leaving us in the lurch!

Faith and Superstition

In the case of traditional practices, always ask -

- (1) Does its continuance promote social welfare and personal salvation?!
- (2) Is its abandonment necessary to promote social welfare?

Then decide.

Association

Mind works on the law of association.

It prays in a prayer room, sleeps on the bed.

Even if the commode is new, one does not like to eat in it!

Temple

A nation or religion which has many temples is no more spiritually backward than a nation which has many courts and police forces!

Temples have a definite place in the life of man.

The power in these houses of God is at first generated by the faith and devotion of man, but later it offers him protection in times of distress - like a savings bank where you deposit money and later draw on it for your use.

Adam and Eve

Even in the statement that after eating the forbidden fruit, Eve realised she was naked and donned a fig leaf, has a meaning.

If Adam and Eve were alone, why should Eve feel ashamed?

Because once Cosmic Consciousness is lost and Jiva comes within the influence of Time, Jiva veils itself by ignorance.

The Guru's Presence

In His presence your problems and worries behave like salt and sugar - they are dissolved.

I have experienced it in Gurudev's Presence.

Introspection

The mind, when it analyses itself, will not easily accept its defects.

The thief will not confess his hidden guilt to you!

You will have to take him to a Magistrate or Policeman who will get the Truth from him.

Only Buddhi or God can discover one's own faults.

Reincarnation

The grave is the first stage of the journey into eternity - Muhammad.

Seven Planes of Existence

Physical Plane.

Lower Astral or Psychic plane - instincts and passions. 2nd Plane

Upper Astral - emotions. 3rd Plane

Lower Mental or Plane of concrete Mind - finiteness, definiteness. 4th Plane

Upper Mental or Plane of Abstract Mind - sees the development of qualities. 5th Plane

Lower spiritual or Plane of concrete spirit - Tendency is the main characteristic. 6th Plane

Upper spiritual, the Plane of Pure spirit or Abstract Spirit. 7th Plane.

Human Birth

Animal has freedom!

Man can attain freedom from samsara - worldly life - hence he forfeits the animal freedom.

If he does not get That, he has lost both.

God and Modern Man

When God is mentioned, the modern man feels that he is asked to eat the humble pie!

Somebody before whom he, an intelligent being, is asked to bow down.

No: God is that Intelligence itself - only something which is his intelligence minus its corruption; his own self.

God 'is' - That which exists is God.

The wall exists: it is God - only that which has always existed.

If it was not the wall, it was the brick, or the mud, or the earth-element, or the power latent in it, or the intelligence inherent in that Power .

'That' is God - the Inescapable Reality.

The Self

The Self is all-pervading - it does not come and go, it has no birth nor death - just as Space is all pervading.

When you look into a pot, there is space in it.

Take the pot away and put it elsewhere - the space in the pot does not move from place to place - in the sense in which water in the pot may be said to.

The five elements are shifted from place to place in the darkness of ignorance - and we foolishly attribute this to the self and say that the self is born or it dies.

Rich Man

(1) is reluctant to give a penny to a poor man.

(2) does all that he can to cheat the income tax dept.

(3) half-heartedly pays the doctor's bills.

(4) helplessly leaves everything here when he dies and goes!

Purusottama

In the Gita - does not mean separate, distinct and different from the Kshara and Akshara Purushas and should not suggest duality between soul and God.

The difference is one of the state of consciousness and not of personality. It is like the difference that exists between the sleeping man and the waking man - though the two refer to the same person, their nature is different. It can be a big official in front of whom a man may steal, if he is asleep, but dare not do anything if he is awake.

Un-Manifest

Nature is to God as glowing is to fire.

This glowing can be of two types -

(1) the flame or (2) the simple glow or luminosity without the 'separate' manifestation of the fire as flame.

Before creation, in a state of equilibrium, it was like the simple glow.

Then it - the same fire - burst forth into flame - creation.

Sin and Svadharma

Does a cannibal sin when he kills?

No! If it is your duty or station in life, you are right in doing it.

The cannibal does not incur sin - but he has not yet evolved into full manhood!

He is still half an animal.

Hinduism

Hinduism is like the banyan tree which grows and sends shoots down which act as subsidiary roots.

These roots are the other Religions - same, yet seemingly distinct.

Levels

(1) Common Man:

He needs to be chastised and frightened - the animal is predominant in him. Hell - punishment - police - these hold him back from adharma - unrighteousness.

God is the Ruler - God is Justice.

(2) Religious Man:

He needs encouragement. Heaven is pointed out to him. Do the right - you will go to heaven.

God is Perfection, Goodness.

(3) Spiritual Man:

He needs nothing to make him love God and Goodness. It is natural to him, inevitable. He aims at realising God - he will be liberated.

God is the Witness - Consciousness. God is all.

Reincarnation

Can you convince me by argument at midnight that the sun would definitely rise in the east the next morning?

If I refuse to be convinced, nothing can convince me.

But that cannot alter the fact that the sun will rise.

Your disbelief does not cancel the fact of reincarnation.

No Conversion

In Hinduism we do not restrict God, or the people to believe in any particular deity or dogma.

You worshipped Krishna - suddenly you felt drawn to Christ - and then later perhaps you felt redrawn to Krishna.

All this does not change your inner being.

We accept both - Krishna and Christ, as the manifestation of the One God.

Creation

Why did God create this world?

So that, when we were delivered by our mother, we might not orbit round the sun!

Genetics

A friend says even the soul is created by the parents only.

I have partly the characteristics of the father and partly of the mother.

I wish it were so - then I would be both female and male and all this nuisance in the world of marriage etc., would cease.

Jesus and Calamity

Not a single component part of his nature did the material world measure aright.

Even his righteousness and purity did not hinder men from saying: 'He is a glutton and a friend of the impure, and Beelzebub is his patron.'

Mary Baker Eddy in 'Science and Health.'

Omniscience

There is often this confusion that he who is omniscient, the Yogi, will be able to tell you where you left the bunch of keys! He may not.

The knowledge by which all else is known is like the knowledge of the nature of salt.

You know the quality of salt and why you use salt in food.

But that cannot enable you to know how to prepare curry.

Omniscience is not the knowledge of particulars.

It is a knowledge of the cosmic ground.

Blood of Jesus

'Here is my flesh; here is my blood; drink it,' said Jesus at the Last Supper. People even today believe they are purified by these.

Mary Baker Eddy says: 'His true flesh and blood were His life: and they truly eat his flesh and drink his blood, who partake of that divine life.'

Who knows, perhaps cannibalism was prevalent in Europe in His time - so, He used the language.

But, it can only mean, 'Even my flesh and my blood are purified because they have been touched by my spirit.'

This bread and wine have also come into contact with me - they are holy.

Remember this and take my Prasada. You will be purified.'

Says Mary Baker Eddy: 'Our Eucharist is spiritual communion with the One God. Our bread - which cometh down from heaven - is Truth. Our cup is the Cross. Our wine the inspiration of Love, the draught our Master drank and commended to His followers.'

Hinduism

Do not criticise the religion by looking at its idolatry, Asanas, Pranayama etc. They are the exercises for perfection - the training for the battle - the laboratory practices in research.

Do you laugh at the soldier during training for shooting at a sandbag?

But, these practices which have been woven into our life are not constantly explained to us - even as our balanced diet has a scientific basis, though it is not explained to us daily before we take our meal - perhaps most of us are not told - we go on faith.

Prepare

Often the experience of the presence of God comes unsolicited!

When we try, we are unable to get it - because, when we are trying, the ego is very much alive.

How to get it then?

When you do get it, you know what the attendant are - well, then, produce them, and having done so, wait! - sometime or other this experience will come.

Heart and the Ego

Often we use terms like 'I said it in fun; he took it to heart.

Heart is the seat of the Ego.

Chitta is also seated in the heart - hence getting by heart means planting it deeply in the subconscious mind.

Mind and Buddhi are in the head.

When they are shocked or disharmonised, we go mad.

If the ego is shocked we may have heart failure.

Gopi

The friends of Krishna - literally means 'hidden'.
The hidden one - the individual soul.

Krishna and Butter

If the Gopis loved Him, would they not have given Him the butter.
He stole to teach them and us a lesson.
'I have stolen the butter of Upanishadic wisdom - it is in the Gita. Come, have it.'

Also - 'Your heart is now like milk which contains the butter of knowledge, but diluted and unmanifest. Churn it with Japa and meditation. Make it the butter of Bhakti - love. Then you do not even have to invite me. I shall steal it even without your knowledge.'

Doubting Thomas

May it merely be Tamas - deluded nature?

Childhood and Youth

It is not correct to say that I now have the same body essentially as I had when I was 3.

If you add a pint of water to a gallon of milk, you have diluted the milk. But if you have added a gallon of water to an ounce of milk, you can't really say that.

My body has, now, very little of the child body of 42 years ago!
Only 'I' is the same.

Proof

If you cannot prove I was born, you cannot say I exist either - for then I never came into being at all!

You cannot prove the world was really created - 'for the first time'.

If you say some such thing, I shall ask 'what was before?'

Hence, the world does not exist really even now.

Ahimsa

Non Injury.

The argument that human life is precious and should therefore be saved at the cost of the animal kingdom - is a double-edged sword and will cut both ways.

The same theory of evolution places the man of God above all - are you prepared to sacrifice your life for his sake?

And, the animal can be sacrificed to preserve the life of a human being - but are you a human being if you allow an animal to be killed for your sake?

Temples and Shops

In ancient India, they built the temple first, then the houses of people who served the temple - and lastly the shops.

Life

Just as the hidden cloud in a clean sky suddenly manifests itself and equally suddenly disappears, some times even without raining, even so, life which is hid.' den everywhere appears and disappears.

It is ignorance that identifies itself with some form - 'This is I' - forms which are often seen in the clouds.

He who ceases to identify himself is happy.

Anger

Throws up a lot of poison into the blood.

In order to remove it and purify the blood, we breathe hard and fast.

Immediate Liberation

Martin Buber tells of the Rabbi of Kobryn who taught; 'God speaks to men, as He spoke to Moses. Cast habit from off thy feet. Cast off the routine which shackles thy feet and thou willst see that the ground on which thou standest is holy ground. For there is no stage of being which, everywhere and forever, God's glory may not be found.

From 'Meditation and Mankind' - V. Lindenberg

Idealism

The best way to illustrate subjective idealism.

If all of us are blind there can be no colour.

If all of us are deaf, there can be no sound.

All of us - i.e. God - are dreaming this world.

Hence it appears real.

It is Maya - Cosmic Illusion.

The Cross

The cross symbolises man's two-way relationship - the horizontal and the vertical.

The first is man's relation with fellow man.

The second is man's relation with God.

These two are not apart from each other, but interpenetrating.

Good

Good is God mis-spelt.

Visualise a child spelling out the word 'God'.

'G' - and then the child knows there is 'o' but not quite sure how many.

So, to be on the safe side he writes instead of one, two oo.

It is God for him - it is also 'Good'.

Let God Lead You

No amount of praying 'Lead us not into temptation' will enable God to answer your prayer.

You have imprisoned Him in your heart and are pursuing sense-pleasure.

Let God lead you - and then you will not fall into temptation.

Guru

Black, cold charcoal glows as fire when thrown into fire.

It becomes fire - Guru becomes God.

If you now want to warm yourself, you draw near the fire - what is that fire now?

The charcoal turned fire - ie., Guru.

Reincarnation

Does man believe in it because he is not prepared to face personal extinction?

No, man's reluctance to accept death is not the cause of, but is a sign of his everlasting Life.

He is immortal. He refuses to believe he will die.

A woman cannot be convinced she is a man - not because she does not want to accept it, but because she is not!

A New Slogan

You can pray in your own way.

Ramayana Etc.

Are allegories in which high philosophy is clothed.

The layman takes them literally and is still inspired, because he feels that he too knows God.

The philosopher or sadhak goes deeper and comes face to face with the philosophic content.

The best of writers cannot produce this miracle.

Prana Apana

Prana - Hydrogen - Apana - Oxygen.

Combined produce fire and water.

Bhasma

At the end of the Kalpa, Siva danced, destroyed everything including the Gods, and smeared their ashes over his body.

Hence its use by devotees in their attempt to 'destroy' 'Samsara' - worldly life.

This destruction is redemption: the world of dust and dirt is reduced into the pure ash.

My Head Quarters

Shoulders by day and pillow by night.

Idol Worship

It has been argued: 'Though God is Omnipresent and dwells in the idol, too, it does not deserve to be worshipped.

Even as though when you dip a 'bucket in the ocean and take some water, it is absurd to identify that bucketful of ocean water with the ocean water - true. Perhaps another analogy will clear the cloud of misunderstanding.

When you breathe in, what do you inhale? Air - but, certainly not all the air in the world!

Yet, you still breathe air.

Would you refuse to breathe unless you can breathe all the air in the universe?

That would be suicide.

Worship the Idol, realising that it is a Reminder of His Infinite Being.

Hate Sin, Not Sinner

It is a very delicate business which only highly advanced souls can do.

Like saying 'Stroke the snake, catch its tail, but avoid its fangs.'

When you are catching its tail, it might bite you!

The masses therefore have always been taught to avoid the sinner too!

Scientific Theories

They have at one time been thoroughly believed and asserted to be true by the greatest scientists - and they have soon been discredited by other later great scientists.

This is obviously because the knowledge derived is the limited expression of the instrument employed and the next one uses other, again limited, instruments and arrives at different conclusions.

The nose cannot see, nor the eyes smell.

Each knowledge is valid in its own sphere - each instrument can work in its own sphere.

Do not claim more and do not accept less.

Wicked Man is God asleep

That he does not behave wisely is no excuse.

A Professor of Maths is sleeping. You go near him and ask him 'What is $2 + 2$?' He does not answer. It does not mean he does not know. He is asleep.

1. Shall we stop birth and death - You will be fed up, seeing the same faces indefinitely.

2. Shall we allow birth and stop death - There will be no place to stand.

3. Shall we remove disease? - There will be no value for health.

4. Shall we wipe out gambling, lying, stealing and other vices? - The very definition of good will disappear.

These achieve a threefold purpose.

1. The wicked man is evolving through trial and error.

2. The mediocre man learns the lesson of goodness and becomes virtuous.

3. The wise man attains wisdom - ignorance is the only evil.

When this ignorance is removed by right understanding, this very world shines as Good.

The Absolute is not struggling between good and evil - it is ever in a state of self-realisation.

Light and Darkness

The conflict is between light and darkness - and when the soul attains enlightenment its darkness goes.

Can we visualise a flat, transparent earth which will always enjoy sunshine on both sides?

No. This play has got to go on endlessly in the universe.

God in you is the healer, God in them is the healer, Love is the healer, Love is God.

'Sympathy' is the best 'pathy'.

Enough

Enough of flexing your body to suit the jacket made by other people.

Expand your soul to suit the companionship of the Lord.

In Madagascar

There is more food on the table than cutlery.

There is more love in their manners than courtesy.

Misery

Running away from misery

I have heard some people say: 'I do not want to run away from pain - I only want God'.

It means the absence of knowledge of God makes you suffer - you want to get rid of it by removing this lack!

Sincerity

People glorify others in order to glorify themselves, to see their own name in print.

If I say that Sivananda is God, others say much more in order not to be considered inferior to me - without a trace of sincerity!

Evil Live Love

'God as Love'.

O is chosen to substitute I.

O is an unchanging vowel.

Look at it from any side - it is the same.

Love is also constant like this O.

O does not increase nor diminish.

$O + O = O$

Time

We speed along to save time - but speed overtakes us and we do not have any time at all!

Leisure and contemplation are most expensive.

Competition is the rule.

Charity has to be wrested from man.

Gita cries halt to this downward trend and makes man take note of himself and treat his neighbour's welfare as his own.

Blessed

'Blessed are ye when you are spoken ill of' - but only if it is for 'My sake'.
This is the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount and Gita Chap. II.

God alone 'is'

Ultimately it is undeniable truth that God alone 'is' - and even the distinction between matter and spirit is arbitrary.

Love and Hate

Love, even if it is gross and physical, I regard as divine.

Hate, even of evil, I regard as demoniacal.

Yoga

Practice Yoga

to sublimate emotion,

to purify thought,

to strengthen will,

to enlighten intellect,

to control mind,

to curb senses.

What Yoga is Not

It is not a religion nor a dogma - its elements and practice are found in all religions.

It is not a secret practice of some strange people - it is life itself.

It has nothing to do with unnatural phenomena - like occult powers, miracles and magic.

Powers are mentioned in books of Yoga as weeds and mentioned in books of Gardening.

Gardening is not for the weeds, but for flowers and fruits.

Yoga is not for psychic powers, but for an inward integration.

Problems

The problems that confront us in life are created by Mala - impurity, Vikshepa - unsteadiness of mind, and Avarana - ignorance of God.

Karma Yoga

External characteristics: Yajna - self-sacrifice, Daana - charity, and Tapas - austere or simple life.

Internal characteristics: Nimitta bhava - feeling 'I am an instrument in His Hands', Narayana - feeling 'All are Manifestations of the Omnipresent Divinity.

Treat work as worship.

Bhakti-Raja Yoga

Removes unsteadiness of mind.

Many desires reduced to one desire for God.

Many loves are focused as one towards Him.

From the personal to the Impersonal, from seen to the unseen, from idol to ideal.

Ultimately the universe is seen as part of God.

Revolution of nature is necessary to become of God-nature and one with Him.

External worship - inner worship - meditation - realisation - are graded stages.

Struggle for Life

How calmly does the ox enjoy grazing?

Does it know it is going to be killed in an hour!

How desperately does it struggle for life?

Does it know it is useless and it will be killed in any case!

Women

Sometimes it is said Hindus keep their womenfolk jailed in houses.
We preserve the purity of our womenfolk, knowing their great value to our culture.

Selfishness

The greatest impurity of heart.
It can be purified by Tapas - simple living.
Tapas prepares the way for Daana - charity.
Daana removes Mamata - mine-ness.
Man suffers because of Mamata.

Gunas

Nature is divided into the three Gunas - Satva, Rajas, Tamas, in some places of the Gita, and into two streams of beings, the divine and the diabolical in other places. There is no essential difference.
When a girl plaits her hair, she divides the hair into three parts; but when she has plaited it, you see only two.

Tastes

It is better to have many - forms of - Gods than one uniform God for all.
Tastes differ - if the same soup is imposed on all, we may disappoint many and throw them out of our camp.

An objector says:

'But you have so many Gods and Goddesses - it is all confusing.'
Brother, you are not confused when you want to marry, and you do not say 'Oh, there are so many girls in this world'.
Take what you want and go.

The Kena Upanishad declares:

'That which the eyes do not see, by which the eyes see - know that to be Brahman, not this you worship here.'

Is quoted by anti-worshippers.

'That which the eyes see not ... ' - only a sage can so, not an ordinary man who does not know that such a Being even exists.

Become a disciple - then you will not need idols.

'... know That to be Brahman ... ' - first know 'That which is beyond' before indulging in criticism.

To quote' ... not this which you worship ... ' before such realisation, merely to condemn idol worship is like putting the cart before the horse.

Good and Evil

As they appear to me is as I like it.

But how will that Being Who is in all, viewing the whole at once, as being His very Nature, designate what is good and what evil?

A commonplace example is illness of one's own body - when parts of my body ill, how do I react.

If I have a cold, I do not cut my nose, but heal it - if I have a malignant growth, I cut it - if I have healthy limbs, I use them - if I have a beautiful face, I have it painted - these are human ideas.

But since they are universal, it would not be far wrong to infer they belong to Him.

Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.

Where there is hatred, let me bring love,

Where there is injury, let me bring the spirit of forgiveness,

Where there is doubt, grant that I may spread Thy faith,

Where there is despair, help me to give hope,

Where there is darkness, may I bring the light,

Where there is sadness, may I give joy,

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

To be consoled, as to console,

To be understood, as to understand,

To be loved, as to love, for

It is in giving that we receive,

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.