

GOOD MORNING... ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **A Memorial Day Retreat** was held last Monday, May 27. Sw. Sarvadevanandaji asked us to join in an annual tradition of reading from Swami Vivekananda's CW on Memorial Day. Selected readings were provided to about a dozen participants; we started at 10:30am and finished about 12:30. After the readings there was a short worship, followed by a potluck lunch. Please join us next year!
- **On Sunday June 23rd**, starting promptly at **11am** we will hold the **Annual Meeting of the Congregation**: There will be reports from your Chairman and Treasurer, and from the Resident Minister; followed by election of Board Members. We will then retire to the Monastery for a catered lunch; *RSVP required*.
- **July 4th Celebration** — Thurs., July 4 at noon — short talk on Swamiji + songs and readings by the congregation, followed by a potluck lunch on sunporch and outdoors, or in the Fellowship Hall, depending on the weather.

- **Please mark your calendar for a weekend Retreat** on the 20th and 21st of July. **Swami Chandrashekharanandaji**, Head of the Portland, OR Vedanta Society, will visit with us on that Saturday and Sunday to offer his wisdom on Karma Yoga.
- **Bookshop note: Cash will be accepted** for purchases only on Sundays, and on Tues. and Wed. evenings. At other times, please bring a check to buy books.
- **Please note that your Center will be closed in August — no activities except Arati.** This will be our routine, each summer.

CHANT • SONG • WELCOME • TOPIC

June is a month for study of Bhakti Yoga. A bhakti yogi (bhakta) establishes a devotional relationship with God through study, prayer, ritual, and worship. As a bhakta, you practice giving every action, thought, emotion, perception and tendency “a Godward turn.” All your energies and attributes, both positive and negative, are offered to the Divine Presence. Your prayer is for self-surrender and, ultimately, union with your Belovèd.

Topic for today’s talk is —

Seven Sayings of Swami Prabhavananda

Swami Prabhavananda headed the Vedanta Society of Southern California from 1931 until his death on July 4, 1976. He had many disciples to whom he gave private instruction. Some of these teachings came to the attention of Edith Tipple (Nalini), a devotee working on the Society's Archives Project.

A skilled writer-editor, Nalini selected seven of the swami's instructions to publish, by themselves, on the last page of her book, "Realizing God." Those notes will be the subject of this morning's talk:

1. *So long as we feel we can do it, so long God remains hidden.*
2. *As you proceed further, you will say, I don't understand anything — until the darkness goes away and there is the light of Brahman.*
3. *I know it's hard to hear but, as I have repeated many times over the years, there is absolutely no one who is your own but the Lord.*
4. *People have a right to their pain and suffering. Don't try to remove it. Sustain and comfort.*
5. *The secret of meditation is fourfold: 1) The chosen ideal is you, yourself, no different;*

learn to feel that living presence. 2) Patience. 3) Perseverance, and 4) expectation.

6. If each one of us would see ourselves as the Atman, the true Self, and look at the things of the world objectively, everything would pass by, and be all right.

7. At the moment we become completely free from cravings and we are overpowered by the one desire for God, that very moment God becomes revealed to us.

This morning we will explore and discuss these 20 lines of instruction, from the perspective of Bhakti Yoga.

First, a little background:

The Upanishads tell us again and again that the Infinite Divine Presence — OM — pervades and shines through your entire body, mind, and intellect. That energy, reflected inaccurately by the contents of your waking and subconscious states, becomes your thoughts, feelings and perceptions. The net effect is to almost totally obscure the source of your being and its power. A false sense of separate identity is created; this unripe ego prompts us to believe we are living and acting independently.

*This is the concealing power of tamas and the projecting power of rajas: **avidya maya!***

We're here this morning to invoke the revealing power of sattva — **vidya maya!**

1. So long as we feel we can do it, so long God remains hidden.

FROM THE OPENING OF KENA

UPANISHAD — The Student asks: '

At whose wish does the mind, sent forth, proceed on its errand? At whose command does the first breath go forth?

At whose wish do we utter this speech?

What god directs the eye, or the ear?'

The Teacher replies: '(Brahman) is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of speech, the breath of breath, and the eye of the eye.

And this, from Ch. 3 of Bhagavad Gita — Sri Krishna tells Arjuna:

Every action is really performed by the gunas. Man, deluded by his egoism, thinks "I am the doer." But he who has true insight into the operation of the gunas and their various functions, knows that when senses attach themselves to objects, gunas are merely attaching themselves to gunas.

Knowing this, he does not become attached to his actions ...

I am the birthless, the deathless, Lord of all that breathes. I seem to be born: it is only seeming, only my Maya. I am the master of my Prakriti, the power that makes me (and all of jagat — Universe).

2. As you proceed further, you will say, I don't understand anything -- until the darkness goes away and there is the light of Brahman.

This feeling of 'I don't understand anything' is the final result of Viveka - discrimination, and Vairagya - release: You have let go of all your lesser truths, your "operating descriptions" of yourself, and of the world and how it functions. More and more, you believe the scriptures and your teachers, and depend entirely on the divine (Saguna-Brahman, Brahman as Ishwara/Ishwari and their Incarnations).

Yes, but how about the other people in my life? And my duties, my work?

HERES'S WHAT SWAMI P SAYS ABOUT HOW TO MAINTAIN PEACE OF MIND:

3. I know it's hard to hear but, as I have repeated many times over the years, there is absolutely no one who is your own but the Lord.

RECOGNIZE THIS AND TAKE A STAND FOR IT. OFFER EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE TO HER/HIM.

BUT WON'T HIS MAKE ME INDIFFERENT TO WHAT HAPPENS TO MY LOVED ONES, MY FRIENDS, AND OTHERS? THE SWAMI SAYS:

4. People have a right to their pain and suffering. Don't try to remove it. Sustain and comfort.

FOR GUIDANCE, PRACTICE MEDITATION REGULARLY — EVERY MORNING AT LEAST. IT HELPS TO KEEP THESE INSTRUCTIONS IN MIND:

5. The secret of meditation is fourfold:
1) the chosen ideal is you, yourself, no different; learn to feel that living presence. 2) Patience. 3) Perseverance, and 4) expectation.

LIVING PRESENCE = BRAHMAN/ATMAN = TVAM (That Thou Art!)

6. If each one of us would see ourselves as the Atman, the true Self, and look at the things of the world objectively, everything would pass by, and be all right.

IT'S SAID THAT THE LAST VASANAS ARE THOSE OF SUBTLE DESIRE — FOR EXAMPLE, TO BE POWERFUL, SO THAT WE MAY DO GOOD.

GIVE ALL SUCH DESIRES BACK TO GOD; REPLACE THEM WITH AN UN-BENDING YEARNING FOR UNION WITH YOUR BELOVED. THIS IS THE BHAKTA'S WAY.

7. At the moment we become completely free from cravings and we are overpowered by the one desire for God, that very moment God becomes revealed to us.

Swami Prabhavananda is the disciple of Swami Brahmananda (Raja Maharaj). Sri Ramakrishna and Holy Mother said Raja Maharaj was their spiritual son; Maharaj served as the first President of the Ramakrishna Order until 1922.

Qs & conversation • CLOSING CHANT