

Only Love and Devotion Counts

Palatine, Illinois, December 12, 2015, Part 2

Welcome, friends, for this second half of today's program. I'm again very happy to see all of you and to see the seeking on your faces. You are all seekers of truth. We are co-travelers. You and I are traveling on the same Path. Sometimes we take some detours and sometimes we take long detours and come back, but we are on the same track. Ultimately, we come back to the same thing.

To go to different parts of the energy and awareness centers inside, there are many routes. We can try many methods. The description of so many yogas, by which one can experience the energy in the body in the six chakras of the energy centers below the eyes—and there are several methods people have tried to go behind the eyes and go into the higher awareness centers into astral and causal planes — but when you go beyond that, there is only one way. Then it all merges into one track — the track that is carried by love and devotion alone. At that stage nothing else counts, no other effort counts. To go beyond the mind nothing else counts except love and devotion.

So, if we know that our destination, our ultimate destination, is our True Home beyond the mind, why not keep this in mind from the beginning — that love and devotion is going to be the answer and start from there, right from here, right now? Because love and devotion can be experienced at any time.

How do we have, how do we develop love and devotion? We can't. There's no way, because the moment you start trying it becomes a mental effort. So, to say, "I am going to love somebody," is a mental effort. You can get attached, you can feel attracted to somebody, you can have other kinds of attractions, but to say that you're going to love somebody is not something in your hands. Then how do we love? We all love somebody. We love somebody who pulls us from the other side. There has to be a pull. There has to be something that pulls us, and love flows out of us.

So, love is not something that we are capable of generating with our will. Love is a pull

that comes, something must pull us from there — love comes. If love is strong and pure, then our response is not merely love — it becomes love and devotion. We become devoted, and we want to do anything in devotion. So that is why we continuously use these terms “love and devotion.” Love is created by the pull of the beloved. Like I sometimes quote that Persian/Farsi phrase: *"Ishq awwal dar dile maashooq paida mishawad."* That love is first born in the heart of the beloved and then the beloved pulls you — you are automatically pulled. Then you want to do anything and that's devotion. Now if this is the thing and we get pulled by the love which comes from a Perfect Living Master — you remove one wall of your mental thinking and you'll experience that love. And when you experience that, whatever you do in response is your devotion, and this is what is going to carry us beyond the mind.

So, make that an essential part. If you have those feelings, put those feelings into practice. I talked of a mechanical/mental way of withdrawing your attention to the third-eye center, creating an imaginary body — this is a mechanical/mental thing, it's not spiritual but if with that body inside, the imaginary body, you talk about love, you talk about devotion, it becomes spiritual. The love and devotion should be kept with you at all times, at every level of your meditation. Starting from here and even when you are having experiences within, that should be something that is continuously flowing from you. You cannot do much about how much love flows from you, but some devotion is within your hands. How you devote, how you respond to somebody — that's in your hands, and that response is good.

So, when you express your love — when you feel love for somebody in this physical world — you express it. The expression is not always in words. Sometimes we use words without expressing love. I hear them all the time: “I love you, I love you. Do you love me also?” The other person says: “But I don't love you.” “Then I also hate you.” You know that kind of conversation I hear, but that is not the expression of love. The expression of love is when you generate a smile, you generate something that you feel is coming from somewhere other than your mind. It comes from your heart which is a — they call it heart, but actually nothing happens in the heart, in physical heart, it comes from the intuitive self inside, but to distinguish we say “head” and “heart,” and the mental things

are “head,” and the intuitive things are “heart” — this is just a way of saying so. It’s got nothing to do with the physical heart. So that intuitive self that responds is the devotion and you can express that devotion. That is why, when you come across a Perfect Living Master, the first thing you will notice is that if it is a relationship based upon love then he becomes your friend, best friend. If there’s no friendship between the disciple and the Master, then this is not the Path of Spirituality I’m talking of. Then that is a worship game.

Worship is different. You worship — you can worship any idol, you can worship any idea, you can worship anything, but the relationship with a Perfect Living Master who takes you back to your True Home beyond the mind is one of friendship. You travel together like friends. Therefore, in meditation you talk like friends that you manifest. When a Perfect Living Master initiates us, which means he accepts us, he places himself inside us. We can’t see him, because our attention is not there. When the attention is fully pulled in and we forget our body, we can see him. Even then we see him at a distance but gradually he comes closer to us and we can have a conversation like we have in the physical body. But till that happens, it doesn’t mean he’s not there — he’s there. If you can’t see him, he can see you; if you can’t hear him, he can hear you. Therefore, continue to have a conversation with him.

We use different methods to concentrate our attention at the third-eye-center. One of the methods is repetition of words, repetition of mantra. Main purpose of repetition of words is to block the mind from thinking of other words. You could use any word and keep on repeating it, it’ll serve that purpose. That we make it magical words is for some other reason; not for the reason that it helps us in concentrating our attention at the third-eye center. By repetition of words we try to control this so we don’t think of other things. But supposing, instead of those words, you’re having a conversation with your Master inside — that’s also holding your attention inside. Supposing you use the words and interrupt them by conversation — it enhances your power to concentrate your attention inside. I’m giving you very practical tips about this, because otherwise we keep on repeating words and keep on thinking of the whole world. The words are being repeated like mechanically and the thoughts are all somewhere else. But when we

involve a living person inside and have a conversation, our thoughts are there, and we pull our concentration of attention right behind the eyes.

So, we should use this right from the beginning of meditation, a conversation with the Perfect Living Master as a friend. Because we are friends. This is one friend you will find with whom you can share anything and everything, which is very difficult to share with most friends in this world. But this will be one friend where you will be absolutely confident to do that. And also get the best advice what to do, in daily life and inside both! It's a — it's a continuous friendship.

One of the very great disciples of Great Master, my master, his name was Doctor Isher Singh — many stories about him — he used to say that the Master is “*yaar*” first, guru afterwards. He's a friend first and a Master afterwards. If I don't even feel he's a friend how can I have him as a Master? So, he was changing from an idea of worship of somebody to loving somebody and devoting to somebody. So, this is a good tip to have a continuous conversation with the Master.

It's not good to have a conversation with a picture, with a photograph. Some people do that. They keep a photograph of the master and they then look at the photograph, then they imagine the photograph inside and they talk. That's not talking with the Master; they're talking to a picture, to a photograph. But if you have seen the Master with your own eyes and remember what you saw, even for a moment, if you've seen the Master even for one moment and can recall that moment, you can recall the Master as you saw him and that image comes in front of you and you stay with that image, the image becomes alive and starts talking to you. It moves forward from that point. It does not mean that you have to remember all that happened and only stick with that. This is only to pull the memory, to pull a live memory of a live person and then that person continues to be alive and continues to be talking to you independently like he would be talking physically. This is a great, great, beautiful part, pleasurable part of meditation. The rest is very dry, you know if nothing is happening, meditation becomes such a chore. And then meditation becomes: “I have to do two-and-a-half hours, every few minutes I look at this — you know, just looking at the watch.” But if you're having a good conversation, time

passes very fast and your concentration is much better, and you get to know your inner self much better that way. So, these are practical things that have helped me. I'm sharing with you so they'll help you. So, make this a very active, active form of relationship with the Perfect Living Master.

It is not that once you found a — just a picture, just an idea, then you just gloat over the idea — that people have been doing in religion all the time. They take pictures — masters were not alive. They make pictures of idols, pictures of statues, and they just go thinking about them. They are talking to their mind. They're not talking to anybody else. When a person says to me: "You know, God is in everything and I can worship anything and talk to God," I say, "Everything that you talk to, except a human being, you're talking to your own mind." Check it out! People say: "We worship birds. A bird can come and represent the same creator that a human being can." And you talk to the bird. The bird chirps, the person says: "That's what he is saying!" — your mind is interpreting what the bird is saying. You're talking to your mind! People tell me: "Our Master we have never seen because he is sitting...ascended Master in the Himalayas and we talk to them inside." I said: "There are no masters. I've gone to the Himalayas. The ones that you talk of don't exist and you're talking to your mind."

This is all a mental game. When you talk to your mind continuously, your mind is very interested in keeping you engaged in activities here, therefore you remain attached to things out here. To go beyond the mind into a spiritual realm you have to talk to a human being who can say "No" to you! Do you know these birds never say "No"? [laughter] These ascended masters never say "No." These trees, animals, they never say "No." A human being says "No." Your mind never says "No." Human being says "No." That's the advantage of a human being. And a human being who can say "No" has a separate awareness and you have created a master through the creative process who has totality of awareness besides you, outside in this experience, and can say "No" to you. And therefore, that's a real relationship. And therefore, if you have to have that conversation it should not be with the picture, not with any other image, but with a living person whom you have seen. That is why people sometimes say: "Can we be initiated by a person or a master whom we've never seen?" Yeah, you can be. But you cannot really

meditate and go anywhere. You have to come back again.

This course of going back to True Home is not a short one. In terms of time it can take several lifetimes. It *does* take several lifetimes. But they say: once you're initiated by a Perfect Living Master it cannot take more than four lives. This was a big subject of discussion when I first came to this country, because everybody was sitting for, waiting for four lives. I was asking them, I asked them: "How do you know this is your first life or second or third or fourth? Have you any idea, which life it is? And you are all waiting for four more lives. This may be the fourth one! Even if it is not, treat it like one! And go back quickly Home! Why are you trying to waste time and go for another life?" The idea came from some Masters saying this is a long course. The Master named Swami Seth Shiv Dayal Singh of Agra where the Radhasoami faith started, he said, and that was recorded in the verses his disciples produced: "*Ek janam* — I'm...I'll translate for you — "*Ek janam Gur-Bhakti, janama doosray naam, janama teesray turiyah pad, chothay mey nij dham.*" He said: One lifetime you spend on Gur-Bhakti, on building up love and devotion for a Guru. In the second life you get initiated. In the third life you reach the causal plane at the top of the mind. Fourth life you reach your True Home. So, because he said this, this whole concept of four lives came.

Now my Master was giving a discourse one day and he mentioned this, just what I mentioned to you, that after you get initiated by a Perfect Living Master of course there is no question of getting more than three more lives. My father, who was a disciple of Great Master, was not present in that meeting. In the evening he met him. He said: "Master, I understand, you said in your discourse today, that after you get initiated you can't come for more than four lives? Is that true?" He said: "Lekh Raj" — that was my father's name — "Lekh Raj, why are you bothered about it? This is your last life! Why are you thinking of four lives?" My dad said: "I was thinking what about if I need a fifth one?" He said: "Master, I understand masters come again and again, and if I love you so much and want to be in your company and I find out you're going to come for a fifth time, you think I should be stuck there because I've done four lives? That's why I'm asking." Upon that Great Master explained to all the people who were assembled there that this "four lives" should not be taken very seriously. If a master initiates you, and you follow his

instructions to the best ability that you can, this is your last life. Just following instructions makes this your last life. If you cannot follow and you know you are failing and you have to — you couldn't complete it somehow — and you are aware of it, you can come for a second life. Only if you leave the Path and run away and say: “No, this is not, no good, that's not the true thing,” then you may have to come (for a) third life. Only if you become somebody against the Master, attack him, kill him, assassinate him, crucify him, you may have to come for the fourth life. So, don't take four lives as a normal thing. Normal thing is one life. Some people have been... because lot of people use to think of four lives being standard. It's not standard. One life is standard, and the rest is exception to the standard.

So, if you follow the instructions as best as you can, and I'm telling you some tips about love and devotion which makes it a certainty: this will be your last life. If you introduce this element of love and devotion in your meditation, this is your last life. But if you do it mechanically and the love is not there and you don't even feel strongly about it, you just have to complete a chore: “Oh, I have to sit two and a half hours” — you know, then you have to come again. If you have not seen the Master, you have to come again. Because the whole idea of visual imagining, visual contemplation in Dhyan, in meditation of a Master, arises from your physically seeing that Master. Therefore, physical seeing is important. If you cannot physically see and recall that image then you have to come again although you're initiated, you are on the Path, you have guaranteed to go home.

So important to spend more time with the Master. Again, an American disciple of Great Master asked him, he said: “Master, how often should we come and see you?” Great Master said: “The best is if you can see me every day.” He said: “Master, people living far away, how can they come and see you every day?” He said: “Somebody is not close by, they can come once a week. It's all right.” In that meeting, when he was saying this my grandfather who became a disciple after my father of Great Master, he was present. From that day he went to Great Master every week, without fail. Because, “If you're not living there, coming from outside, come once a week,” he would go once a week. He heard the Master say: “That's a good way to spend time.” “But, Master, if somebody living far, very far away, not within reach and cannot afford even to come that often?” Then Master said:

“Then, once a month should be all right.” Then the American disciple said: “Master, we’re living overseas. It’s very costly to travel. How often should we come from overseas?” And Great Master said: “In that case come once a year. It’s all right.” Then he said: “Supposing, Master, we can’t come once a year?” Master had a smile and said: “Then wait for next life.” [laughter] It’s important.

They say there’s an importance of Satsang. What is Satsang? Sat Sang, the company of the truth. The experience of being with the Master, the experience of gathering together, the experience of talking about the Master, thinking about the Master, that experience has to be repeated often — for the simple reason if we don’t do it, the mind floats away. Our mind has too much — too many attachments outside and does not stay. So, but every time we gather together, at least once a month we gather together, people can come from at least some distances, some can come once a year. But really speaking: if you don’t even have time for that, then there is something odd about the priorities of life. I sometimes say that if you want to be successful on the spiritual path, you should set your priorities right. What is more important? Somebody said: “I had to go shopping. So sorry, I missed the Satsang. I just wanted to buy a chair, and I went and it was — I didn’t have enough money for the \$800 chair, I only had \$100, I put my \$100” — I’m telling you a true story — “I’ve put \$100, for the lay away, so the chair was laid away for me. So when I complete \$800 I’ll pick it up. So, I missed the Satsang. Next month I had to make another \$100, so I missed the Satsang.” After that the person died, neither got the chair nor came to Satsang. True story! Now what is happening to that person? He has to be reborn just for the sake of the chair. He has to complete the payment of the chair and pick it up. So, we get into priorities which are not the most important for us.

If you are on the spiritual path in all seriousness and want to be on “list A,” which means go his very lifetime, put this as priority number one. Put this priority number one overriding everything else you do. Now you might say: “You know, sometimes I have more important things to do. And if I start putting this spirituality ahead of my worldly responsibilities, I put my meditation over my going in time to my job, my boss will fire me.” I said: “Have you tried it?” Because I tried it. And I’ve done lots of jobs. Lots of jobs! In government, in private sector, businessman, every type of job I’ve done. When I put

the priority high all the jobs went well. Better than they would have if I'd not put the priority on spirituality. We don't realize that everything adjusts. After all, it's all being created from the same source. Everything adjusts according to your priority: what is more important for you. That is why, if you put priority on your spiritual path — “this is number one” — everything will fall into place and goes beautifully. And then it's beautiful because then you can see the effect. You can see that you spent time at the third eye center in the morning with your Master the whole day thing that's happening, you say: “Master, you did it! Because you told me something you're going to do!” and the whole day is doing like that. You see a series of miracles on that day. Try it out! This is not a theoretical model. This is a practical experience. You can practically see. Don't go by book knowledge; go by actual experience in these things. Try it out! Try for one week! Put priority number one and see how things go so smoothly, everything goes smoothly, after that.

So, these are things that you will learn as you go along, and then the spirituality becomes part of your life. Then you are automatically on the spiritual path. No... no effort is needed. Do you know there's no effort needed to love somebody? If you fall in love, there is no effort involved. And I just read earlier in the morning that when you surrender to the Master's Love your effort is over. That's the effort: finished! After that everything flows. But the problem only is when the mind comes in and says: “I have to make an effort now!” Why don't you let the Master also make a little effort? Why not try that, experiment that? “So, okay, Master, I want you to see, you say you're my friend, and you have more power than I have, okay, let's see, test it out. At least my mind will also be happy to see this and let me test out in a few cases and let's see your power!” You will see it! These are amazing things that you find by experience. But if you are in a state of doubt and skepticism and don't even try this, you can't see it. And sometime the mind blocks us, and we can't even try and see it. So, we should open the mind.

Actually, the mind has got so involved in these things — some of you will come next time to my meditation workshop, please remind me. I'll tell you how to separate the mind from yourself, the soul. So, you can at least see: this is the mind. Right now, it's all so merged, it's all so mixed up. You think. You say, ‘I'm thinking.’ The “I” has got associated, the self has got associated with the process of the mind. It is not so! It's using the mind to think. The mind is a machine. It's like a computer — you're using it — installed in the same place (touches the head).

But just because we use it all the time, we have identified with it. So, when you can learn to put the mind aside — “mind, do your business, I’ll do mine” —you can do that! You can enjoy a meditation session with the mind trying to think of all sorts of things and you’re ignoring it. You can do that! So, you have to learn how to distinguish between your own self, the soul, consciousness per se, life force per se, and the thinking machine that’s added to it for the sake of thinking. So, once you’re able to do it your life changes, your meditation changes.

So, I am very happy to share all this with you. They have Prashad today, right? And, Prashad is blessed food. It’s a traditional thing, that we used to go to Great Master, he would give us Prashad. It was puffed rice. We would take it, blessed by him. Blessed doesn’t change the molecular structure of the Prashad, by the way. It doesn’t change anything, it’s still the same food. Lest you think...some people take it home: “That’s Prashad. I eat it for medicine. I skip my...today I got pain, I’ll not take my Tylenol, I’ll take the Prashad.” It won’t work. [laughter] Prashad is to take to be able to remember who gave it. It’s the association of the ideas with that Prashad — that’s the value is. The value of Prashad is: that every time you take, you think of Master, which is good because that goes on with our [being] able to remember the Master and think of other things much less. So Prashad helps in that. So, this Prashad that is going to be given, I’ll bless it with my Great Master’s blessings. And how many of you would like to take it? Oh, quite a few. I thought, if they are few I’ll come over and give it to you with my new knee but [laughter] I don’t think... I think you’ll have to come to me. Is that all right with you? Okay, shall we get the Prashad then?

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