

Meditation and Its Function
1961 teaching on The Art of Meditation
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Tape 424A

Good evening.

Indeed, I'm very happy to be back here in Stockholm. This is really my third visit to this city; and this, as you must realize, means that there are students here who have benefited by this study of this message. Those of you who are not familiar with our work may I call to your attention the fact that we started the evening with a meditation. In our work, the basis of all work, the basis of all living is in our meditations, and the reason is to be found in the 15th chapter of John in the Bible. Here we are taught that if we live, if we abide in the word of God, if we let this Word abide in us, that we will bear fruit richly. If we do not abide in the Word, if we do not let the Word abide in us, live in us, we will be as a branch of a tree that is cut off, withereth, and dies.

You recognize, of course, that the human race is that branch of a tree that is cut off and is dying. It is always dying and always has died—in disease, or in sin, or in war. It is always going through a dying process. Rarely does it know long periods of peace, or long periods of health, or long periods of happiness; and the reason is that it is cut off from the Source of life. We, each one of us, while we're living the purely human life, live like branches, as if each one of us is a branch, but each one of us is separate from the other, and each one is separate from our Creator.

When we turn to the spiritual life, we are supposed to be reunited with our Source. We are supposed to once again live in the secret place of the most High, abide in the Word, let the Word abide in us. But, a question arises. How is this accomplished? In past years, many people believed that if they attended church, or if they lived the ordinary life of a good Christian, or a good Hebrew, or a good anything that they were abiding in the Word and that they received the blessing of God. Many people have believed that if they prayed very much that they would be under the government of God. None of this has been true, because the proof of it is in what happens to this human world, even when it goes to church a lot, even when it prays a lot. The mere act of being a good human being does not bring one under God's blessing or law. The mere act of being a good Christian or a good anything else in the religious world does not ensure that one will receive the protection of God, the supply of God, the health, or the grace of God.

All of this is a matter of history throughout all of the centuries. As a matter of fact, Christ Jesus himself told the Hebrews that he was teaching that their being good and that their being good Jews was not sufficient, that your righteousness had to exceed that of the scribes and the Pharisees; and the scribes and the Pharisees were about the best of the Hebrews in the entire synagogue—and yet that wasn't enough. He even went so far when he was asked why John the Baptist was suffering imprisonment. Why wasn't he receiving

the protection of God? And, the Master answered that even though John the Baptist was the greatest of all the Hebrew prophets “the least of you will get into Heaven before him.” In other words, his good religiousness, his living up to the laws of the church, and the rules of the church did not constitute the quality that would gain him God’s grace. Paul brought the same thing to light when he said that, “As creatures, you are not under the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Only—and remember this—only if you become children of God are you under the law of God, the grace of God, the blessing of God.

So, as we trace the history of what we might call “righteous people,” we find that it is not necessarily those who live up to church rules and church regulations who are the righteous but those who have in some way received in them the spirit of God. “If the spirit of God dwell in you,” says Paul, “then do you become the children of God.” If the spirit of God dwell in you. He did not say that all those to whom he was talking were children of God and neither did the Master. If so be the spirit of God dwell in you, then do you become the child of God; and if you become a child of God, you are then heir of God, joint heir to all the heavenly riches. But, there is always this “if.” If the Spirit of God dwell in you. If you become the children of God.

Strangely enough, we have overlooked a great deal of the Master’s teaching, because he made it clear that you do not become a child of God by going to holy mountains or holy temples, that you do not find the kingdom of God in these holy mountains and holy temples; because the kingdom of God is neither “lo here, nor lo there.” The kingdom of God is within you.

Now, this may not sound like a radical teaching, but I can assure you it is very radical. It is so radical that if you understand it correctly and if you hadn’t heard it before and begun to change your life, you’ll find that it is not a very simple thing to come under the law of God. It is not a very simple thing to receive God’s grace. There are many steps to be taken before the spirit of God dwells in us. First of all, there is that very point that we are not going to get the spirit of God by going some place. We are not going to get the spirit of God just by being good human beings. And yet, the Master left a blueprint for us—a map—to show us how we can get the spirit of God to dwell in us, how we can come under God’s grace. And, one of these ways that he pointed out is that instead of spending all our time praying for our friends that we must pray for our enemies. And here, you see, is a point that, in our human lives, we have neglected. We have forgotten that you do not get to be a child of God by praying for yourself, or your friends, or your relatives. You get to be a child of God when you begin to pray for your enemies. Very clearly stated in the Scriptures.

Again, we are told that instead of praying where we can be seen of men that we have to learn to pray secretly, silently, sacredly; to enter into a sanctuary, not in a holy mountain or in a temple but in a sanctuary within ourselves, for the kingdom of God is within you. And, we have to enter into prayer within ourselves, and let no man see us praying, and tell no man about our praying but be satisfied that “the Father that seeth in secret will reward us openly.” He also told us that when we do alms, when we give our charities, our

benevolences that we must be careful to do those secretly, not to be seen of men, not to receive the praise of men because of our charity, but that we do our charities and benevolences and kindnesses silently, secretly and again “the Father that seeth what we do in secret, rewardeth openly.”

Now, to me, as this became clear, I caught a vision; the vision I would like to give you now. And that is this. There is a Father that is a divine Presence, by any name, that is within us, within our own consciousness, closer to us than breathing, nearer than hands and feet, closer than breathing. Way down deep inside of us is this God presence. Call it by any name you like—the presence of God, the presence of the Christ, or the presence of the spirit of God. But, first of all, remember that it is within us. Secondly, that if we are to be in the presence of God, if we are to benefit by the power of God, we must make contact with this Presence within ourselves. Again, this Presence that is within us cannot be fooled. It has no interest in how holy we are externally. It has no interest in what laws we obey externally. It has no interest in our pretensions, in what we seem to be or pretend to be outwardly. This Father within, this divine Presence absolutely knows what is taking place in our hearts. It pays no attention evidently to what we say with our lips, because you will have noticed that throughout these past thousands of years most of all the praying that has been done with the lips has gone unanswered and unrewarded. The people of this world have been praying for peace, for prosperity, for health, for safety, for countless thousands of years; and they’re facing just as much war, and just as much accident, and just as much disease, just as much sin as at any time in all history.

So that the lesson that was shown me in this was that there is no use of saying anything, thinking anything, trying to pretend to be something. That which is within us knows. *It* searches our heart. *It* searches our mind. *It*, the light of Truth, is flashed inside of us; and every hidden thought, and every hidden secret, and every hidden deed is known even if our nearest and dearest never suspect us. *This* that is within us knows. “Your Father that seeth in secret, rewardeth openly.” *It* knows the intents and purposes of our hearts. Therefore, prayer need not have any words or thoughts, because anything we would say or think the divine Presence knows all about, even before we ask, even before we speak. Therefore, it’s folly to waste time thinking thoughts and speaking when all we need to do is be silent and let this Light that is within us search the joints and marrow, search the mind, and heart, and soul. And, be assured of this. We are rewarded in accord with that which we really and truly are, not that which we are pretending outwardly.

“Therefore,” he said, “the Father that seeth in secret, rewards thee openly.” “Therefore,” he said, “pray not to be seen of men but pray in the inner sanctuary of your being.” Then, when we close our eyes in meditation, and that is what we do in this Infinite Way work; we teach our students to begin with at least three or four meditation periods every day, each period to be three, or four, or five, or six, or seven minutes; and then gradually as meditation becomes easier, more natural, to increase the amount of times we meditate and even increase the amount of minutes that we spend in each meditation; because the meditation really becomes our communion with God. Now, our meditation is not made

up of words and thoughts, because we can't fool God. We might as well just be still and let God search around inside of us and know what is going on.

Our meditation, then, is an *inner communion*. First of all, it has to be the recognition that the Father is within me. Therefore, when I close my eyes, I'm shutting out the outside world; and I am, even if I don't say it or think it, I'm meaning, "Here I am, Father, coming to you within me for communion that I may know Thee aright. Scripture tells us, 'To know Thee aright is life eternal.' To know God aright is life eternal. And so, I'm coming, Father, to become acquainted with you." "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace...." "Lean not unto thine own understanding...." "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace...."

How can I acquaint myself with God? First, by recognizing that the Father is within me. Then, by going within:

Now, here I am, Father. I in Thee and Thou in me, and we are one here where I am. It may be a public building. It may be my home. It may be some church with an open door. It may be a library. It may be in my automobile, or on a train, or bus. But, wherever I am, Father, Thou art, for Thou art here within me. I am in Thee, and Thou art in me, for we are one. And so, I'm here. And the purpose? To know Thee aright. I am not seeking favors. I'm not asking for favors. I'm seeking to know Thee aright, to commune with Thee, to feel the assurance of Thy presence. Why do I need this? Because I have lived too long without Thee, and I have not made too much of a success of my life.

Sometimes, my understanding hasn't been up to my problems. Sometimes, my virtues have not been up to that which is demanded of a man in this world. Sometimes, my strength has not been sufficient for the problems of the day. Sometimes, my fears have been too great. Sometimes, my doubts have gotten in the way with harmonious living, and this only means that I have been living separate and apart from Thee. And now, I seek to know Thee and to feel Thee within me. If only I could feel Thy presence, I would have the courage to face any situation in life. If only I could feel Thy presence, I would be able to fulfill my obligations to my family, to my business, to my nation, to the world. Alone, I cannot achieve this. Thy Grace is my sufficiency in all things. But, I must have the assurance of Thy grace. I must feel Thy presence. I must know, not merely declare it because it is written in a book, I must feel it. I must experience it.

That is why the Master taught, 'I, of my own self can do nothing. The Father within me doeth the works.' It is like Paul taught, 'I live, yet not I. Christ liveth.' And that's why I'm meditating. I am not sufficient unto myself, except that I have Thy presence, Thy grace, Thy wisdom. Thy wisdom is infinite. How, then, can I rely only on my wisdom? Thy strength is

perfect. How can I rely on my strength? And, here we are taught that, 'Thou art closer to me than breathing, closer than hands and feet.' And, I have been living without this assurance of Thy presence. So, I am here in meditation to know Thee aright, to acquaint myself now with Thee, to feel an inner oneness with Thee, even as the Master knew it, 'I and my Father are one.'

As some of the old Hebrew prophets knew it, 'The place whereon thou standest *is* holy ground.' Think, 'The place whereon thou standest....' This place where I am, which seems to be so mundane, so human, so material; this very place whereon I stand is holy ground, for Thou art here. Thou art within me. Thy Presence is with me. Thy Presence goes before me. Thy Presence is my rock, my foundation, my dwelling place. I live and move and have my being in Thee. And, in this meditation, I acknowledge it. I acknowledge that I can of my own self do nothing. I acknowledge that where I am, Thou art. And, therefore, if I mount up to Heaven, Thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, Thou art there. If I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, Thou art there, for the place whereon I stand is holy ground. Here, where I am, Thou art.

Thy Presence is the very health of my countenance. Thy Presence is my food, my substance, my sustenance. Thy Presence is my safety and my security. Thy Presence assures me of peace on Earth. Peace. Did he not say, 'My peace, give I unto you.' And, how is this meant? If the kingdom of God is within me, then it is the voice of God that says to me, 'My peace give I unto thee; not as the world giveth, my peace give I....' Why this is God speaking to me from within me. This is God giving me the assurance, and so it says, too, 'I will never leave thee.' I, this Father that is within me, is assuring me He will never leave me, nor forsake me. I never can be outside of the kingdom of God, as long as I am abiding in this Word and letting this Word abide in me.

When I abide in this Word, as I have been doing in this meditation, when I let these words pour through me, I am veritably in God's presence, and God's presence is in me. And then, the 91st Psalm comes to life and says, "None of these evils shall come nigh thy dwelling place." Why? I have been living in this "secret place of the most High" within me. I have been living in the presence of God within me. I have been living in the word of God, and if I live in the word of God, and if I let the word of God live in me, I and my Father are one; and the spirit of God then dwells in me.

Now, when I have reminded myself of these things and, you see, I haven't been asking anything of God. Nothing. I merely have been assuring myself of the scriptural promises, the word of God. I've been merely reminding myself of the presence of God. And now, when I have completed that I can turn within and say, "Speak Lord, Thy servant heareth." And then, for just a minute or two, I become completely silent and listen, and eventually I

learn that God is not in the whirlwind. God is not in my problem. God is not out here in the world. God is in the still, small voice that comes to bring to me the assurance, “Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine,” or “Son, I will never leave thee,” or “Son, my presence goes before thee to make the crooked places straight.” Always, there will come some inner assurance of God’s presence.

Now, there are times when we begin a meditation of that kind and then, all of a sudden, something reminds us that we are violating the law of God or that we are not obeying some law of God. As, for instance, it can happen as it did in Scripture. Do you remember this that when the man went to pray and then the voice comes and says, “If you go to the altar to pray and there remember that any man has aught against thee, get up, and go away, and first make thy peace with thy brother. Then, return to the altar.” So, it may be that sometimes when I start my meditation, I will be reminded, “You are holding anger, resentment against somebody. You are not forgiving seventy times seven, and there’s no use of praying, because this unforgiveness is a barrier to your receiving God’s grace. This inability to pray for your enemy—the prayer of forgiveness—is a barrier. So, don’t do your meditating. First, turn within, and do the act of forgiving or the act of praying for those who spitefully use you or persecute you. First, turn within and consciously release all men from any antagonism that you’re feeling. Release everybody that harms you, or your family, or your nation in a realization, ‘Father, forgive them. They know not what they do. Father, open their eyes that they may see. Open their ears that they may hear. Father, give them light, forgive them. They know not what they do.’”

Then, I can return to my meditation, feeling now I have naught against anyone, and it isn’t possible for anyone to have aught against me, nor does it matter if they think they do, once I have forgiven them. I have obeyed the Scripture. No more an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. No more seeking vengeance because of wrongs done me or mine but forgiving seventy times seven. Now, there’s no barrier between me and God. I am open to receive God’s grace.

Each time that we meditate, we find that something entirely new, something entirely different enters our consciousness to remind us of the nearness of God, the presence of God, the wholeness of God, the perfection of God. And, some of these times experiences come to us of a very shocking nature. Naturally, I don’t know your particular religious background, but I’m sure there must be some of you who were taught that God punishes sin and rewards goodness. As long as you have such superstitious beliefs in your thought, you cannot enter the kingdom of God, for God does not punish, and God does not reward. It was true before the advent of Jesus Christ that the religious world was taught that God punishes and that God rewards, but Jesus Christ changed all of that when he taught that God forgives even the woman taken in adultery, not after many years of punishment but now. Right now. Right now, in the instant when she seeks it, forgiveness is there. “Neither do I condemn thee.” The thief on the cross, “Neither do I condemn thee. I will take thee into paradise with me this very night.” In other words, the whole of the Master’s teaching is forgiveness, not punishment.

Some of you may have been taught that some of your troubles come to you through God, that for some reason God has visited this upon you. It's utter nonsense. It's a teaching that only existed before that of Jesus Christ, not since; because the Master reveals that he came to do the will of God; and the will of God is forgiveness seventy times seven, healing of disease, raising from the dead. And so, you find it a terrible shock sometimes when you go into meditation and find that you're still believing that God has visited death on somebody. God has called some loved one home, or God has punished someone by bringing about their death. And, when you wake to that you ask God instantly to forgive you for your ignorance, forgive you for your injustice, and realize that the nature of God is Love. The nature of God is life eternal in which there is no death. "God has no pleasure in your dying. Turn ye, and live." The whole life of the Master was raising the sick to health, never once telling them that they were under punishment for something. The whole ministry was raising those from the dead, proving that God never brought about their death, and God never approved of their death, since the mission of the Christ is to raise us from the dead.

Sometimes, when we go into this meditation, we find that we have been thinking these old, ancient beliefs about God, and we haven't brought ourselves up to 2,000 years ago in religious history. We're still living in the history before 2,000 years ago. And so it is that in our meditation, we have an opportunity to cleanse ourselves, purify ourselves of any untrue thoughts that we've been entertaining about God; because before you are through with meditation, you'll find that the greatest source of joy in the world is the love that develops in your heart for God.

Now, you can hear people all over the world saying how much they love God, and you know right well they're liars, the same as I do. Nobody loves God that fears God. Nobody loves God that believes that God can strike them dead. Nobody loves God that believes that God can bring them a disease. Nobody loves God that believes that God can punish. That's all a lot of nonsense. People are not even telling themselves the truth. When you love God, it is because you trust God more than you trust your own mother and not before. Not before. You wouldn't love even your own mother, if you thought she had the power to strike you dead, or to give you a terrible disease, or cause an awful accident, or make you lose your mind. You wouldn't even love your mother under those conditions. And, I know you can't love God. Love for God comes when you know that God is Love; and in Him there is no hate, no punishment, no unforgiveness, no human qualities like that but only the divine quality of love, forgiveness, joy, raising up from sin, raising up from disease, raising up from death, never pushing down.

Then, there comes a love in the heart, and you really can say, "I love the Lord, my God, with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind, because I have no fear of God. I have no questions about God, what God will do at any moment or under any circumstance, because I know God is Love. And, God is in the midst of me. Love is in the midst of me. Love prepares the way for me. Love supports and maintains and sustains, and when I make mistakes, as humanly I must do, it is God that forgives, God that raises up, God that says, 'Go and sin no more, neither do I condemn thee. Thy sins be

forgiven thee.” Who but God could voice that to us? Could man forgive us, if man didn’t have God in his heart? And, if man forgives us, be assured it is only the God in his heart that causes him to forgive us.

Do you think that you can forgive those who have done evilly unto you or to yours? Be assured that you can’t, unless it be that you have God in your heart, and God can say to you, “Neither do I condemn.” Then, you can say, “And neither do I.” And, when you hear God say, “Forgive them, they know not what they do.” Then you can say, “Yes, I can forgive, for all that the Father can do I can do by His grace, by His love. His love in me enables me to do. Of myself, I can do nothing. If I bear witness to myself, I bear witness to a lie, but by knowing that the Father within me doeth the works, the Father within me forgives. The Father within me heals. The Father within me raises up. The Father within me says, ‘Even if you have fallen down seventy times seven, there will still be another opportunity to go forward.’” Then, you know how to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and you feel that love coming right back to you within you. These are the thoughts that go through our minds in meditation and thousands more like them.

One of the greatest teachings ever given to us by the Master was the *teaching of one Power*—the fact that God does not have a power directed against Him or a power that He has to overcome, but that *God is the all Power and the only Power*. Now, in our religious teachings this has not been brought to us, because we have been taught to think of God as some great power that, under certain circumstances, can overcome evil powers. He doesn’t do it very much in this world, but at least we’re taught He can. But, the error of all of that is this. The Master never taught that God overcomes evil powers. The Master taught that evil has no power. He was able to say to Pilate, the great temporal power of his day, “Thou couldst have no power over me, unless it were given thee of God.” The Master was able to say to a crippled man, “What did hinder thee? Pick up thy bed and walk.” The Master was able to say to a blind man, “Open thine eyes.” And, never once did he ask God to do anything. He recognized God’s Allness by recognizing that nothing else had power.

So it is, then, that there are times when we go into meditation, and we are confronted with something that to us is an evil power. Now, as you know, there are times when it’s some form of illness. There are other times when it’s some form of lack, or limitation, or bad business. There are times when it is something concerning our national or our international life. But, remember, it wouldn’t be threatening us at all, unless we believed that it had power. As a matter of fact, we wouldn’t even be paying any attention to it. It would be like we are at this moment in this room. None of us is sitting here praying that God do something to some evil person. We’re satisfied there are no evil persons in the room, and, therefore, we are not bothering to look around for any great powers to do something. We are recognizing that there’s only one Power in this room. That’s Love. Love brought us together. Truth brought us together. Love of Truth brought us together. That’s the only power there is in this room. No one in this room hates anyone else. No one in this room is envious of anyone else. No one in this room wants anything of anyone else. We are here only for one purpose, and that is to praise God, to love God, to

understand God, to come to know God, to share with each other whatever of God's grace we have. So it is, then, that we are acknowledging that in this room there is but one Power, and that is the Power of Love and of Truth, and there are no other powers.

So, eventually, in our meditations, we sit down, and we begin. There's a problem out here—health, supply, the nation. And, because we're in meditation and we're going to God, we would like this problem solved. We would like to see it dissolved. And so, we say to ourselves in meditation, "Father, what is this? What's the solution to this problem? What is the solution to this problem?" And, as we meditate, again something within us reminds us, "Fear not, *I* am with you. Fear not, they have only the arm of flesh. Fear not, my Presence goes with you. Fear not, this could have no power over thee, except the Power came from God, for God is the only Power. Do not fear anything or anybody."

Ah, ha, this comes right into mind. Do you remember it? Jesus, Jesus coming to the ship in the storm. "Fear not," he says, "fear not, it is *I*." Right in the storm, "Fear not, it is *I*." And, do you know, in this meditation, sometimes with your problem staring you right in the face or waiting to do it when you open your eyes, sometimes in this meditation it'll come to you like this, "Fear not, it is *I*. *I*, in the midst of you is the only Power. Be not afraid. It is *I*. Do not fear any appearances. Do not fear man whose breath is in his nostril. Do not fear what man can do to thee. *I* am in the midst of thee. Trust thou in me." And, in our meditation that way, the word of God comes. Truth comes, and then we find that when we start out again on our living the problem has a way of dissolving. It has a way of dissolving, because in that meditation we receive the assurance that there are not two powers battling against each other, but that this Power that is within me, the kingdom of God within me, is the only Power. And, therefore, even if I look out and see a "Pilate," an enemy, even if I look out and see a sin or a disease instantly the word of God comes to me and says, "Be not afraid, it is *I*. *I* am with thee. *I* will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." And then, the fear dissolves; and when the fear dissolves, really, the whole picture dissolves.

Now, you see why *meditation is the foundation of our work*. You could read these words of Scripture in the Bible. You could read them in metaphysical books, spiritual books, mystical books. But, they have no power there. The only power they have is when you're in meditation going within to your Source, which is right within you, and then receive the word of God do you find *Its* Power. Then, you'll find that the armies of the aliens just disappear. They dissolve. They fade off the face of the Earth.

So it is, *the kingdom of God is within you is the basis and the secret*. And then, since the kingdom of God is within you, you must learn to go within and "acquaint now thyself with Him who is within you" and learn about His function in your life. Learn about the nature of God, so that never again do you fear punishment. Never again do you fear separation, because Paul summed it all up in this, "Neither life nor death can separate me from the love of God." And, he could have added to that, as the Master did, "Not even my sins can separate me from the love of God, because His rain falls on the just and the unjust." And, in that recognition, I find myself free, not only of the punishment for sin

but the desire for sin. Meditation sets us free from the fears and the dangers of this world and brings to light divine Harmony, divine Grace, the grace of God.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very, very much for listening to this, and I hope those of you who would like to know more about this will join us again in our meetings tomorrow and the following nights. Thank you.