

29. Unity is Divinity

EMBODIMENTS of the Divine Spirit! The ancient

saying, "All roads lead to Rome", has been vindicated today. It is not without great significance that people from many countries have gathered in this historic city. You have to realise that you have come here to learn things which you have never heard before, and to derive inspiration from new ideals about the human adventure.

This Conference is not concerned with any one religion, nation, race, caste or individual. It is intended to reveal the essential Truth that underlies all Scriptures and to strive for the peace and welfare of all people through the establishment of Truth and Righteousness.

The whole of mankind belongs to one Religion--the Religion of Man. For all men God is the Father. As the children of one God all men are brothers. This Conference is therefore a family gathering. It is not a meeting of nationalities and religions. It is a meeting of minds. It does not relate to any one culture or philosophy. It is concerned with the divine way of life that is implicit in the teachings of all religions. Its purpose is to see Unity in Divinity.

All religions proclaim the Unity of Divinity

The basic truth in all religions, irrespective of country or race, is one and the same. The philosophic ideas or the practices and methods of approach may vary. But the final objective and goal is only one. All religions proclaim the Unity of Divinity and preach the cultivation of Universal Love without regard to caste, creed, country or colour. Those who are ignorant of this basic Truth develop pride and ego because of their own religion. Such people are creating great confusion and chaos by fragmenting Divinity. To confine and divide the Infinite Divine into such narrow compartments is treason to the Divine. The basis for a spiritual, Godbased life is the indwelling Spirit--the *Aathman* (divine soul). The body is the home of Spirit.

Life in society should also conform to this spiritual basis. Man, however, bases his life on the belief that the body alone is real. It is to rid him of this error that he has to be taught about Spirit. Mankind has to realise that both the individual and society are manifestations of the Divine Will and that the Divine permeates the Universe. Only by recognising this Truth can man give up his ego and lead a life of devotion to duty. Society should not become a cockpit of selfish individuals, but a community of divinely guided Individuals.

With the progress of science man imagines that he is the lord of the universe and he tends to forget the Divine. Although man today has gone to the moon and is exploring outer space, if he were to consider the innumerable mysteries and wonders in creation yet to be known, he will realise that these are far beyond the limited capacity of mind and intelligence. The more man discovers the secrets and mysteries of the cosmos, the more he will realise that God is the creator and motivator of all creation. All religions are agreed upon this Truth. All that man can do is to strive through his limited intelligence and knowledge to understand the invisible and infinite Divine and learn to worship and adore Him.

Service to Society is the means to promote Unity

Instead of realising his innate Divinity, man is caught up in the prison house of his own material 'achievements. Greater than all his scientific and technological progress is man himself as a being endowed with the divine consciousness. By choosing to regard only the material world as real, it may be possible to bring about the prosperity of a scientific, technological and

materialistic society for a time. But if, in the process, human selfishness, greed and hatred develop, as they usually do, society will destroy itself. If, on the contrary, the essential Divinity of man is realised, mankind can build up a great society based on unity and on adherence to the divine principle of Love. This profound change must begin in the minds of individuals. When individuals change, society will change. And when society changes, the whole world will change. Unity is the secret of social progress, and service to society is the means to promote it. Everyone therefore should devote himself to such service in a spirit of dedication.

It should be realised that material comfort is not the sole aim of social living. A society in which the individuals are concerned only about material welfare will not be able to achieve harmony and peace. Even if it is achieved, it will only be a patched-up harmony for, in such a society, the strong will oppress the weak. Nor will an equal distribution of the bounties of nature ensure anything but a nominal equality. How will the equal distribution of material goods achieve equality with reference to desires and abilities? Desires have, therefore, to be controlled by developing the spiritual approach and diverting the mind from material objects to the Divine seated in each one's heart.

Divine experience is inherent nature of man

Once the Truth of the Indwelling Spirit is recognised, there dawns the awareness that the world is one family. One is then filled with Divine Love which becomes the driving force for all of one's actions. Man turns away from the pursuit of endless desires to the search for peace and equanimity. By converting the love for material things into Love of God one experiences the Divine. This experience is not something beyond man. It is, in fact, a part of the inherent nature of man. It is the secret of his humanness and his Divinity.

Whatever one's religion may be, everyone should cultivate respect for other faiths. One who does not have such an attitude of tolerance and respect for other religions is not a true follower of his own religion. It is not enough merely to adhere strictly to the practices of one's own religion. One should also try to see the essential unity of all religions. Only then will man be able to experience the oneness of Divinity. There should be no kind of coercion or compulsion in the sphere of religion. Religious matters should be discussed calmly and dispassionately. Do not entertain the feeling that one's religion is superior and another's inferior. Conflicts on the basis of religion should be totally eliminated. To divide men on grounds of religion is a crime against humanity.

Man today imagines that he knows everything about Nature and the Universe. But of what use is all this knowledge if man does not know himself? It is only when he understands himself that he will be able to know the Truth about the external world. Man's Inner Reality cannot be known by exploring the world outside. When he turns his vision inward and realises his essential Divinity, he will acquire an equal-mindedness towards all beings. Out of that feeling of oneness he will experience the Bliss that passeth understanding.

Message to International Symposium in Rome on the theme

"Unity is Divinity," held on 30 and 31-10-1983

God is Omnipresent; He is immanent in every being in equal measure. So, man must visualise Him equally in himself and in others. That is to say, he sees only God in all. So how can he injure

others or fear that he will come to harm through others? This is the basis of the Indian ideal of Ahimsa (non-injury).

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