

Sat Chit Anand

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He who will lose his life, will save it.



In every religious tradition it is known that in order to see God – that is, to know the Truth, to encounter the final Reality, one must die. In fact, there is a threefold death through which everyone must pass – death to the world; death to the flesh; and death to the ego. These are the 3 great illusions which bind us to unreality and prevent us from knowing the Truth, and at no time have they been stronger than they are today.

The 1st death means that we must transcend and release our fascination and obsession with the world of illusion and sense-appearances. The physical world presented to our senses seems to have independent reality and this is maya, illusion. It has no being-in-itself apart from the transcendent reality. To believe in an independent reality is ignorance and spiritual blindness which has lost touch with the reality from which it comes and which supports its being. In Buddhist language: all things are “empty” of inherent existence ie

they do not exist independently. In Christian language: all things live and move and have their being in God.

The 2nd death is to die to passion and desire which keeps us in bondage of sense pleasures, and prevents us from attaining higher spiritual love. Sex should be holy, a reflection of our desire to attain union with the Divine. The union of bodies is a sign or sacrament of the union of souls uniting in love and entering into communion with the Divine. The instinct for love in our nature can never be satisfied with anything less than God. Human marriage is but a shadow and a symbol of the spiritual marriage which has to take place in the cave of the heart.

The 3rd death is the death of the ego, and this is the hardest of all. One may resist the fascination of the world and the flesh, but who can resist the love of self? It pursues the spiritual man even to the very gates of heaven. The Buddha said that clinging to the desire

for separate existence is the root cause of all suffering. Christianity calls this sin, which means separation from God. This self-clinging comes from ignorance – not knowing our true nature that is one with the Divine. We have to let go of this illusion of separation, and acknowledge and surrender to the Source of our being, and become one with the Totality.

The paradox is that it is only when you have renounced the world that you can really enjoy the world; it is only when you have renounced the flesh that you can take pure delight in it; and it is only when you have renounced yourself that you can discover your real being. The monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience represent the renunciation of the material world, the flesh, and the ego (Thy will be done not my will). They are the basis not only of all religious life, but of all human life. Body and mind have to sacrifice their independence and autonomy and surrender to the inner Spirit. Only then can there be harmony and yoga, union with the Divine. This is the death which they have to undergo in order to be resurrected into true being.

Based on Return to the Centre by Father Bede Griffiths
OM SHANTI, LOVE LEELA

Today is the first Sunday of Lent. What are you going to die to this Lent?

Teachings on Meditation

A series of DVD teachings by Swami Suddhananda

Thursday evenings: 19h00 - 21h00

Cost: by donation

Gentle Mindful Hatha Yoga

Tuesday evenings: 17h30 - 19h00

Wednesday afternoons: 16h30 - 18h00

Cost: R50 per class

NOTE: There will be no yoga this Wednesday as i am attending a yoga workshop.

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