

**SEVEN
PATHS
TO
PERFECTION**

Kirpal Singh

I have written books without any copyright—no rights reserved—because it is a Gift of God, given by God, as much as sunlight; other gifts of God are also free.

—from a talk by Kirpal Singh, with the author of a book after a talk to students of religion at Santa Clara University, San Jose, California on November 16, 1972.

The text of this book is the same as what was published during the lifetime of Master Kirpal Singh. Aside from punctuation and capitalization corrections, no changes have been made to the text; it is exactly the same as what was approved by Master Kirpal Singh.

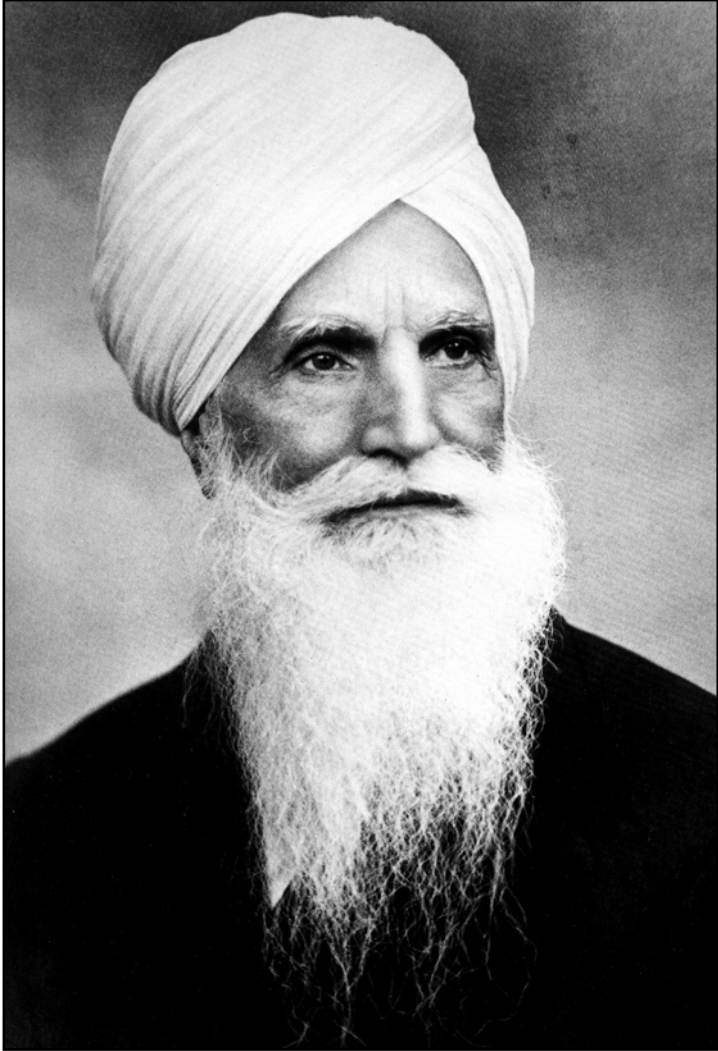
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Sant Kirpal Singh Ji
(1894-1974)



Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj
(1858-1948)

Dedicated
to the Almighty God
working through all Masters who have come
and Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj
at whose lotus feet
the writer imbibed sweet elixir of
Holy Naam — the Word

Sant Kirpal Singh passed on from this earth in 1974. As such, He is no longer taking on new people to guide out of this world and back to God. He left many books that explain, as much as can be in a worldly language, the meaning of life. The books and the Ruhani Satsang website <http://www.RuhaniSatsangUSA.org/> are maintained to help stir an interest in God and to help people know what to look for in their search for the way back home.

When asked about a successor, we can only offer this quote from the Master:

“Today there is a great awakening beginning. Some have got the answer, some have not, but the search to solve the mystery of life has been born all over the world. The day that question arises in the mind is the greatest day of one’s life, for once it is born, it does not succumb until it is satisfied.

So, make your life an example of the teachings you follow — live up to them.

If you have a strong desire to get it, then God Himself will make the arrangements for you.”

[Excerpts from a talk published in the January 1971 issue of SAT SANDESH]

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“Truth is higher than everything but higher still is true living. Truth and true living are not exclusive of each other but go together; one supplements the other and their combination forms the God-like life. One who practices true living will always earn his living by the sweat of his brow and feed himself and his family on rightly procured foods consisting of fruits, vegetables, nuts, cereals and permitted dairy products. Furthermore, he will be honest and aboveboard in his dealings with others.”

Dear Ones:

I received much appreciative encouragement from many a dear one when Circular No. 17 was issued and released in August 1961. This helped a lot in some ways and many aspirants benefitted therefrom. A similar communication is being released now for your guidance and assimilation.

A tiny seed contains a mighty oak in its heart which can blossom forth into fullness by proper nourishment and protection. All young and tender saplings do need hand-watering, periodical weeding, fertilizing, and protective hedging against the stray wayside cattle so that the saplings are not harmed. In due course of time the tree grows into full maturity, providing shade and shelter to the wayside travellers and becoming a source of help and inspiration to others.

Exactly in the same manner, the Holy Seed of Initiation thrives best in a rich and fertile soil formed of high ethical values and loving compassion. A divine stir by the Living Master of the soul in man is a happy start for the long spiritual journey ahead. You have been therefore invariably advised to do self-introspection which helps in developing fertility and in germinating the divinity to full bloom. The five cardinal virtues enumerated in the prescribed self-introspective diary aid immeasurably in covering

the entire field of ethics, and help a lot to invoke the Divine Mercy. All these are discussed briefly in the following pages under their headings.

Kirpal Singh

Note: Circular 17 is included as Appendix B in this booklet.

CARDINAL VIRTUES

AHIMSA (NON-VIOLENCE)

It is an ennobling virtue that brings each one to par with his or her fellow beings, and ultimately leads to the principle of the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. The cultivation of this virtue demands a broad development of toleration towards all, irrespective of their shortcomings and failures. To radiate the grand principle of the Family of Man on the divine ground of loving and compassionate desire for the well-being of all, costs very little but counts very much. A heart full of divine compassion is the abode of all virtues.

A close review of the problem would show that ordinarily we are neither worried nor irritated when everything goes in accordance with our wishes. No sooner do we fancy that our interests are thwarted or feelings are injured, then a chain of reactions starts, resulting in violence in thought, word, or deed, according to one's physical, mental, or moral make-up. Many of us consider it our legitimate duty to repay the real or supposed insult in the same coin, and very few would consider it a virtue to forego, forgive, and forget.

Jesus always preached the two cardinal virtues: (1) "*Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself*" and (2) "*Love Thine Enemies.*" Does that mean that it is out of timidity or weakness that one should love and forbear one's

enemies? No, there is something moral and divine that lies at the root of such an attitude.

The place where fire burns becomes heated first and then transmits its heat to the atmosphere around. So it is the case with fire or anger. An imagined or supposed wrong keeps rankling in the mind like a thorn. When one cannot bear its intensity, one bursts forth into flames of hatred and contempt (begins abusing right and left), loses his balance of mind, and like a canker keeps emitting a malign odor that virtually goes on polluting the atmosphere around.

Most of our injuries and wrongs are the outcome of our own process of thinking, and such thoughts breed countless others, multiplying in geometrical proportion. We can get out of this vicious cycle only by changing our attitude towards life. Why sacrifice our natural equanimity for mere trifles, for passing bubbles and vapory nothings that are things of no consequence? Instead of brooding over these supposed and imagined wrongs, it would be better by far to contemplate on the higher aspects of life, the divinity within and the divinity without, for this world is verily of the Divine, and Divinity resides therein.

If we really wish for God and aspire to attain to the Godhead, we must learn to love His creation, for God is nothing but Love. St. John has emphatically proclaimed: "*He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is Love,*" Saith Kabir: "*The soul in man is of the same essence as of God.*" This being the case, we must try to live in our natural habitat of love and

all that is and belongs to love, for love beautifies everything within and without. We live because of the Love of God which is but a life-principle. Love, Life and Light are synonymous. The whole creation is the manifestation of His Love, and God verily dwelleth in it. Again, it is said that the entire creation has sprung from Light and none need, therefore, be dubbed as “Good” or “Bad.” Intrinsically, all of us have our roots deeply embedded in the Light and Love of God, though we may not be aware of it because we seldom get an opportunity to peep inward, for we are all the time wholly engrossed in outer environments and have not the least idea of what lies within the real Essence of essences, the Source of all life, which is the Love and Light of God. If we only knew this and practiced it in our workaday life, we could not but live within the Love of Him by whose Love we live and all life exists. *AHIMSA* (Non-violence), then, is the practical aspect of the Divine Life, and a Fruit that grows on the Tree of Life.

TRUTHFULNESS

God is Truth and Truth is God. A truthful person always works in the Light of God. He has nothing to fear in the world. Ever clothed in the Divine Light, he works and bears himself in Godly simplicity, for God is his sheet-anchor and a haven of refuge. Don't tell lies. If you do so, you deceive yourself first and then others; moreover, you have to tell many more lies to cover your one lie. One should therefore follow

the motto: *“Be true to your own self – don’t deceive yourself.”* If one is true to his own self, he is to fear none, *“for he is true to God in him, Who is in all hearts.”* He would, therefore, speak truth, think truth, and deal in truth, for he is aware of the divine help at every step. Adversity cannot deter him, misfortune cannot betray him, and opposition cannot waylay him, because the gracious God-Power is his shield and help, and comes to his aid anywhere and everywhere. Such a heart becomes an abode of all other virtues, which follow of their own, to find sympathetic cooperation.

Truth does not mean simply speaking truth and thinking truth, but it is a righteous mode of life. *“Truth is above, but higher still is true living.”* Our actions should be exemplary so that they show and denote that we belong to a noble school of thought based on Truth, Piety, and Love. A tree is known by the fruit it bears. The divine tree of Spirituality needs to be nourished with the waters of Ahimsa and Truthfulness.

“Truth,” says Kabir, *“is the highest of all virtues, while falsehood is the vilest of vices.”* The Truth of Truths resides in the innermost recesses of the human soul and needs to be dug out, unearthed and freely practiced in all our dealings. The True Sound-Principle is the source of all life, and it is only by contacting It on the Divine Ground that we become truly Truthful and our life can be molded on the pattern of Truth. By practicing Truth and living in Truth, one gets clothed in the Love of the Lord and freely extends Love to all and sundry.

In all the four ages, because He incarnated in all four ages, Kabir preached of the true Sound-Principle. It is through day-to-day contact with This that one purifies one's life and makes one's self a fit receptacle for the Divine Grace.

CHASTITY

Chastity is life and indulgence is death. Continence is a virtue to be observed for success in all the spheres of life, be they mundane or spiritual. A clean and chaste life is a fertile soil wherein the Holy Seed of Spirituality thrives the best. It consists of restraint in thought, word and deed; as in each case the poison is injected into the depths of the mind and multiplies with the accumulated impurities of countless ages.

To cultivate chastity is an uphill task that requires a long-drawn struggle through life—something very strenuous indeed. Fortunate are those who practice celibacy because they are in a far better position to follow the Path Godwards than those who are wallowing in the miserable mire of self-indulgence. A normal temperate married life as enjoined by the scriptures is, however, no bar to spirituality.

An analysis of the facts of life will show that normally much depends upon our environment and mode of living. Diet plays an important part in the build-up of our mental thinking. The food we take, when assimilated in the system, colors our life impulses in its own color. The very bones and blood

get dyed in the color of the food we take. Adult-erated or dead foods cannot be the source of Life. This is why the Masters on the Path of Spirituality always insist on complete abstinence from all meats, fish, fowl and eggs (both fertile and infertile), and from all alcoholic beverages or intoxicants and other opiates and stimulants, as one dulls the thinking faculty and the other flares up animal passions within, and renders one insensate to the higher impulses in life. “*As you think, so you become,*” is an age-old aphorism; and to it may be added; “*As is the food, so is the mind.*”

A natural diet, comprising vegetables, fruits, nuts, butter, bread, and cheese in moderate quantities, is highly nutritious for the health and strength necessary for carrying on obligations of life, either earthly or spiritual.

An eminent physician says: “*We dig our graves in the kitchen, and more deeply with our teeth.*” Moreover, closely connected with this problem is the far-reaching inexorable Law of Karma, the Law of Cause and Effect, or Action and Reaction. “*As you sow, so shall you reap,*” is an adage too well known to need any comments. You cannot have roses out of tares. Everything in the world, or of the world, has to be paid for. Even our so-called joys and pleasures require a price. You cannot take away life without paying the penalty thereof. “*The wages of sin,*” said Christ, “*is death,*” and you can well decide for yourself if you are prepared to pay for it.

By the observance of Brahmcharya (celibacy), we not only preserve the vital fluid of life (which is rather an invaluable asset in the physical body and can in no way be underrated), but it positively helps one in attuning to the Divinity, already woven into the very pattern of our life but lost in the mighty swirl of the world. The lost strands of the life-giving threads—the Holy Light and the Audible Life Stream—as manifested by the Master, cannot be held for any length of time, unless we are firmly embedded in the life of chastity. A vacant mind is the devil’s workshop, and hence constant repetition of the Charged Words and Remembrance of the Master are counselled. These act as powerful aids, and help in anchoring the mind and keeping it steadfast in the otherwise tumultuous sea of life. It should be clearly understood that no amount of intellectual attainments or sophisticated reasoning can stand by you in an hour of tortuous agony, only the gracious protection of the Master.

Again, ripe fruits retain their freshness so long as they remain on the branches, but when once plucked can only be preserved either in honey or in some high-grade refrigerators. The personal aura of the Gracious Master is the embalming honey and His loving protection, the invaluable cold storage, where one may find hope for liberation from this ancient malady. The lives dedicated to the Holy Cause of God have left behind records of their precious experiences which show in abundance that there is hope for everybody, provided one is earnest in his or

her endeavors, and provided above all, there is proper guidance and help from a truly competent Master-Soul.

As every Saint has a past so has every sinner a future, but nothing can be accomplished without the Grace of the Master-Power overhead. The child-disciple has, of course, to keep himself busy and occupied in something useful, or at least in repeating the Sacred Charged Names mentally, shunning bad company and uncongenial environment—like study of obscene literature and art—and by avoiding looking into the eyes of others, particularly of the opposite sex, and in strictly taking vegetarian diet, conservatively cooked, and in strict moderation. These are some of the helping factors which, if pursued steadfastly, can bring in sure results in due course of time, with the Grace of the Master-Power overhead.

Here it may be necessary to say a few words about Brahmcharya. Literally speaking, it means the Path (the practical path of one's conduct) leading to Brahman or God. It consists in controlling all the senses and channelling them in the right direction. In other words, it makes a life of continence, temperance and self-restraint, including total abstinence from all kinds of unwholesome foods and drinks. A life like this is a *sine qua non*, or a necessity, for the Path Godwards or Brahman-wards; and the aspirants are well advised to follow it scrupulously.

LOVING HUMILITY

Humility is an ornament of the Saints. It exalts them in the eyes of both man and God. A genuine Master-Saint sees the Light of God in every living being, and hence no wonder He meets the child-disciple on a level of equality, and treats him or her as His very own.

As a fruitful branch hangs low with the weight of its own fruit, so does the Master, with the weight of the Divine Treasures within Him, lovingly meets all and sundry, irrespective of any social and religious considerations, who come to Him to partake of His riches and to tread the Path to the eternal Home of the Father.

“Service before Self” is a rare gift. When the same “Self” operates in every living creature, one ought to delight in service for its own sake. “Self” and “Service” are but two aspects of the divinity. This understanding of the shared nature of the universe, despite its apparently multi-colored designs and patterns, brings about an attitude of equipoise which, in turn, gradually leads to serenity and sublimity; and one gets engaged in the service of all, and begins to see the corresponding self-same Enlivening Principle working in all creation.

Just as a smallest cog is indispensable in a vast mechanism and serves a useful purpose, similarly, all is beautiful and full of divine manifestation, serving a purpose under His Will. Such an idea strengthens

the silken bonds of loving brotherhood, and wins the pleasure of the Lord and the Master.

*Sweet tongue imbued with humility,
O Nanak! is the essence of all virtues.*

St. Augustine laid great emphasis on the virtue of humility. “*Humility first, Humility last, and Humility throughout*” was the supreme theme that he had to give to his audience when he rose to deliver his convocation address to students. Beyond this, he said, he had nothing more to give them. Similarly, Kabir once declared that He lived in low humility just as a fish lived in water; for this exalted man to the status of the Devas or gods.

This is the only virtue that allows a person to enter the Court of the Saints. For the advent of the Beloved, one has to empty out his very own self from within, and then live in Him all the time. Once, Kabir said, he went out in search of a wicked person, but could find none in the wide, wide world; and, at last, when he peeped within himself, he saw that he was the wickedest of the wicked. This is the acme of humility.

Kabir also said: “*I am the lowest as compared with all others, and all are better than myself—those who see that way are my friends.*” Nanak always spoke of Himself as “lowly Nanak,” “poor Nanak,” “Nanak the slave or bondsman.”

Guru Amardas always prayed to God that He should make Him “the slave of His slaves.” My

Master once said that He would like to make shoes out of His skin for the feet of His devotees.

False pride of worldly possession or pelf, assumed superiority because of spiritual knowledge or intellectual attainments, vanity of earthly things and status, may turn astray the mind of the spiritual aspirant; yet, in course of time, all these vanish into thin air. On the other hand, a heart full of reverential humility is a fit receptacle for His Grace; a receptacle, which when filled to overflowing, runneth over on its own to others. For a humble person, no sacrifice is too great in the large interests of spiritual development; whereas a proud person would endlessly wait and even miss the chance when offered.

Time and tide wait for no man. Human birth is a priceless asset granted by Providence in the ascending scale of evolution and its highest object is spiritual perfection, for which all of us are here. Fortunate are those who are spotted, singled out, and Initiated into the Mysteries of the Beyond, and are linked with the Divine Attributes of Holy Light and Celestial Sound. It is now up to us to "*make hay while the sun shines.*" If we take but one step forward, He will come a million steps to receive and to greet us.

The very idea of attaining spiritual perfection is a happy augury and a prelude to the greatest venture in one's life. It is the Divine Mercy which, when stirred, brings about such a sublime thought.

This grand Mystery of Life cannot be resolved by

intellectual attainments or by sophisticated reasoning, which may bring in knowledge but not wisdom, and which also may induce that pride of learning and leadership making it all the more difficult to enter the Kingdom of God. The crown of all understanding is to realize our present state of self-complacency and the abject misery in which we are unwillingly caught and feel helpless to escape. A closer view of things will reveal that the soul is enshrouded with thick veils of ignorance and is being driven hopelessly in endless gyres up and down on the giant Wheel of Creation.

DIET

As already discussed under the caption of CHASTITY, diet plays an important and an integral part in the life of a spiritual aspirant and, as such, should be given its due importance. All prohibited foods and drinks should be scrupulously eschewed, even in the face of medical advice, as none of these can lengthen the scheduled life-span nor are, in fact, conducive to nourishment. It is certainly a wrong notion that flesh or eggs give extra vigor or strength; on the contrary, these things flare up the carnal appetites which, in the long run, result in gross dissipation of energy.

It is gratifying to learn that the people, all the world over, are gradually coming to realize the benefits of vegetarian diet; and the leaders of this thought have taken upon themselves the duty of propagating its importance among the masses. So far, the world has

witnessed no less than fourteen Conferences held in different parts. India, too, had the good fortune to hold one in the year 1957, when representatives from different countries of the world gathered together to exchange their views in the time-honored and historic capital — Delhi.

An advanced section of public opinion has, of late, begun to lay greater stress on what they call “*vegetable-ism*” as distinct from “vegetarianism.” If we, for instance, look at goats, horses, bulls and elephants, we find how healthy and strong they are; so much so, that in all mechanical terminology, we calculate the load-capacity in terms of “horse-power.”

St. Paul in his Epistles to the Corinthians said: “*Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them.*”

Again, “*It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth.*” (Romans 14:21)

“*And God said, ‘I have given you every herb-bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree-yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.’*” (Genesis 1:29)

From “The Gospel of the Holy Twelve”:

“*Therefore ye shall eat no flesh, nor drink strong drink; for the child shall be consecrated to God from his mother’s womb, and neither flesh nor strong drink*

shall be taken, nor shall razor touch his head.” Now Mary and Joseph, His parents, went up to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover, and observed the feast after the manner of their brethren, who abstained from bloodshed and the eating of flesh and from strong drink.

“... and eat not that which is set before you. That which is gotten by the taking of life, touch not, for it is not lawful to you... Son of Man is not come to destroy but to save, nor to take life, but to give Life to body and soul.”

MERITS

SELELESS SERVICE

Man is a three-fold entity, comprising body, mind, and soul; and it behooves one to be of service to his fellow beings in all the three spheres. “*By Love serve one another,*” is the exhortation of St. Paul. A Persian text says: “*Service exalteth the server.*”

“Selfless Service” is said to be a great virtue and a reward in itself. It is the central theme of the sacred teachings of the Masters. The Living Master is an embodiment of selfless service. He always rushes to the aid of his loving children all the world over, caring little for His physical comfort. It is the Divine Law which He reveals and fulfills in His own person. Out of sheer compassion for His brethren,



DIARY TO BE MAINTAINED FOR SELF-INTROSPECTION FOR THE MONTH

Send to: HIS HOLINESS SANT KIRPAL SINGH JI MAHARAJ –

OBSERVE	FAILURES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
(1) AHIMSA (Non-Violence)	In thought																		
	In word																		
	In deed																		
(2) TRUTHFULNESS	In thought																		
	In word																		
	In deed																		
(3) CHASTITY	In thought																		
	In word																		
	In deed																		
(4) LOVE FOR ALL HATRED FOR NONE, IRRESPECTIVE OF POSITION, WEALTH OR LEARNING	In thought																		
	In word																		
	In deed																		
(5) DIET																			
	TOTAL																		
(6) SELFLESS SERVICE	Physically																		
	Financially																		
	TOTAL																		
7. SPIRITUAL PRACTICE (Time devoted in)	1. Repetition of names																		
	2. Connecting Sound Current																		
	TOTAL																		

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

HELPFUL FACTORS: 'Service before self' — Attend Satsang
His commandments — Self-control & D

MONTH OF _____ INITIATED _____

HARAJ — SAWAN ASHRAM — GUR MANDI, DELHI 7, INDIA

15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	RESULTS AT END OF MONTH
																	(1) How far are you withdrawn from the body?
																	(2) What you see inside.

ADDRESS _____

Satsangs — Love for the Master — Implicit obedience to control & Discipline — Humility — Sincerity & Longing



He serves all to redeem them from the “Great Wheel” by inverting their attention within and by linking them with the saving life-lines.

The more one serves, the more one’s self expands and, in course of time, goes out to embrace the entire creation. We must, therefore, take upon us the task of bringing the Master’s message to every nook and corner, so that people may know of the wonderful opportunity that is theirs, and avail themselves of it as best as they can.

Again, selfless service may assume different forms according to one’s means and capacity. Some may like to attend the needy, the poor, the down-trodden people, or the sick and the disabled by lending a helping hand in their distress.

If you attend a sick person or stand by an afflicted one, you serve the Divine Cause. Certainly you do not and cannot take away the sickness or affliction, but surely you can help in assuaging the sufferings by your kindly words and deeds. Every sweet word uttered or helping hand extended to those in distress goes a long way in purifying the mind and the body. A loving heart is a fit receptacle for the Divine Grace, for God is Love. *“He who knows not Love cannot know God, for God is Love,”* says St. John. Love knows no barriers and no class distinctions. It flows equally and freely towards all, transcending all impediments.

Again, a rich person with a loving heart would

wish to share his riches with the indigent or the needy, and spend his money in charitable and philanthropic purposes.

The system of Tithe has been prevalent in practically all the established religions of the world, and it has a deep significance because tithe-paying shows how honest a man is, and his offerings show how liberal he is. From the old records it appears that all the countries in the East, from Egypt to Afghanistan, and all the Christian world were following the system of paying one-tenth of their earnings for the good of the people at large. Among the Muslims, there is the institution of “Zakat” which requires every person to set apart, every year, one-fortieth of his possessions for charity. Among the Sikhs and Hindus, this system goes by the name of “Daswand” which is an equivalent for tithe.

The Master, however, has extended it further (apart from one’s monetary earnings) to the dedication of time for meditation, as well — viz., about two and one-half hours out of 24 hours. The Masters further enjoin, “*Be in tune with God, and share your earnings with all the others in need,*” Kabir said: “*By giving away money, it will not be lessened. If you are not satisfied, you may try for your own self.*”

But offerings should be free and voluntary, and should not be inspired by any thought of reward, or be the outcome of impositions from without; for then instead of being a source of liberation, they become the source of bondage. Again, charity should not be

misplaced, but it should be given to alleviate the sufferings of the distressed in the world. In fact, the all-knowing Master is the best judge, for He knows how best to utilize the subscriptions coming from His disciples and puts them to a really useful purpose.

One must be extra discriminative and vigilant enough, lest by the misuse of his hard-earned money, one may be contracting more Karmic debts, instead of liquidating the existing ones; for every action, howsoever good, has a reaction and leads to bondage. This may be bondage with golden fetters, as Lord Krishna pointed out to the Warrior Prince, Arjuna, when He said that all deeds, whether good or bad, have an equally binding efficacy; and chains forged by them may be of gold or of iron. St. Ignatius of Loyola tells us: *“The seeds of sanctity and sin are already within us.”* It all depends which of these we cultivate in the garden of our soul.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Spiritual practices form an essential part in the spiritual aspirant's life, and should, therefore, be a daily **“must”**. The repetition of the Five Sacred Charged Names conveyed at the time of Holy Initiation, orally or mentally, is not a difficult task, and carries a deep meaning. Although it looks so simple and easy at the outset to obtain proficiency in it, one needs extra love and fortitude. You will appreciate that the Holy Names carry the Life-Impulse of the

Master, which works wonders in withdrawing the sensory currents from the body level up to the eye-focus, thus preparing the soul for eventual inner journey on to the regions of bliss and harmony.

Certain hours for meditation should, therefore, be fixed, set apart, and pursued regularly and earnestly; for each such repast brings in nourishment to the soul, and one is led within to the Divine Light which dispels the darkness of ignorance. It is like purifying the receptive vessel every day for receiving the Divine Grace. Daily meditations clear the gross dross that one gets *at the sensuous level*.

The second important part of meditation is listening to the Holy Sound Current, the Audible Life-Stream, coming from the **right side**. It is equally an important aspect of the spiritual practices, and should not be ignored or lost sight of. After Initiation, it is the disciple's duty to enrich his spiritual experiences from day to day; and he can certainly extend his field, with the grace of the Master, to any length he may like, opening up new vistas of sublime glory and beatitude.

In short, self-introspection helps in cutting the branches and pruning all that is undesirable, while meditation (spiritual practices) strikes at the very stem of the tree or worldly life.

Before closing this paper, it may be worthwhile to say something about the tremendous amount of correspondence with which the Master has to deal

from day to day, and this work, as you will appreciate, is expanding limitlessly with the passage of time. All the dear ones are, therefore, to be careful in this behalf. It however does not mean that you should not write letters to the Master. You are, on the contrary, most welcome to do so and particularly in all matters of vital importance when you really feel that the local representatives are unable to offer a satisfactory solution to your problems, or you wish to have instructions covering inner mystical experiences on which the Master alone is competent to give advice.

But in all matters of a routine nature and guidance in daily life, it may be easier and speedier to discuss matters of local interest directly with the Master's representatives and they, too, have His instructions to refer to Him all matters about which they may feel any hesitation to deal with satisfactorily.

With lots of love and deep affection for you all.

Yours affectionately,

Kirpal Singh

APPENDIX A

Dear _____,

If you have failed in thought, word or deed, on any of these questions – make a check mark on your diary sheet. What you do each day – is either for you or against you. Weed out the “weeds” that “choke” our Spiritual Growth and Light!!

“The mistakes of last year are not to be repeated!”

Have you hatred within?

Do you have aversions?

Have you malice towards anyone?

Do you wish for another’s suffering?

Do you have dislike for people, foods, weather, etc?

Have you hated anyone?

Are you resentful of others?

Are you envious of others?

Do you rejoice in their misfortunes?

Do you carry grudges against anyone?

Are you suspicious?

Are you greedy?

Do you indulge in self-pity?

Do you grumble and complain?

Are you fearful, worried or afraid?

Are you critical of others?

Are you after name and fame?

Are you conceited or egotistical?

Do you carry ill-will within you towards another –
country – color – religion – etc?

Have you shamed anyone – in their presence or in the
presence of others?

***Without faith and faith in the Master –
One cannot advance on the Path***

Do you have Faith?

Do you have faith in the Master?

Are you faithful to the Master?

Do you have love for the Master?

Do you talk about Master in doubtful ways?

Do you talk against Master?

Are you looking for miracles from Master?

Are you happy in spite of troubles?

Are you grateful?

Do you have forgiveness?

Do you give service before self?

Are you giving Selfless service – physically?

Are you giving Selfless service – financially?

Do you attend Satsang regularly?

Do you have excessive attachment or possessiveness?

Are you kind and loving?

Do you have self-control and discipline?

Do you stay in the required diet?

Do you have daily periods of Simran and Bhajan?

Let us live a new life of peace, harmony and love. The essence of religion is love, peace, humility, service and sympathy. Love all, not merely your relatives and friends. Love the sinner, too. Bless them that curse you. Pray like Guru Nanak:

“Peace be unto all the world, under Thy Will, O God”

With all love,
KIRPAL SINGH

About the Author

Considered by many people who met him in the East and in the West to have been a living example of a true Saint of Spirituality, Kirpal Singh was born in a rural setting in Sayyad Kasran in the Punjab (then in India, now in Pakistan) on February 6, 1894. He followed the career of a civil servant in the government of India, and retired on his own pension in 1947. Following instructions from his Master (Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj, 1858-1948), he founded and directed RUHANI SATSANG. He was commissioned by God and authorized by his Master to carry forward the spiritual work of contacting sincere seekers after God with the WORD (or NAAM). He continued in that capacity until he left the earth plane on August 21, 1974. Elected four times, consecutively and unanimously, as President of the World Fellowship of Religions, he upheld the truth that, though the various religions are different schools of thought, the Aim of all religions is One and the Same. Kirpal Singh visited the major cities in the United States on the occasions of each of his three world tours: in 1955, in 1963-64, and again in 1972, staying in this country for three months or more, each time. From his intense study at the feet of Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj and from his own personal inner experiences of a spiritual nature, Kirpal Singh was eminently qualified to convey to sincere people everywhere the importance of self knowledge and God realization.

APPENDIX B

Circular 17: Love, Concentration and Self-Surrender: The Psychology of Mysticism

When one undertakes to reach a certain goal in any field of human activity, it is necessary to take stock of one's progress from time to time. It is only through such stock-taking that one can become conscious of one's shortcomings and errors, eradicate and uproot them, and plan out future progress. Having put our shoulders to the wheel of the Great Master's Cause, it is necessary that we should, in like manner, review our activity and achievement, from time to time. Without such self-analysis and self-criticism, no real advancement is possible; and it was to encourage this practice and make it a daily habit that, in the case of individual initiates, I insisted (and continue to insist) that they maintain a daily record of their thoughts, words and deeds, and of the period of meditation. What is necessary for us as individual initiates is even more necessary for us as members of a large movement.

Reviewing the work done in the past few years, there is much, I find, for which we may be grateful. Many have shown remarkable capacity for selfless service and others have made commendable progress on the inner path. Nevertheless, while noting this with pleasure, I cannot help observing the growth

of tendencies which must be a matter of concern for all of us. In spite of repeated exhortations and persuasions, I find growing and springing up amidst us the weeds of discord and disharmony. Competition seems to have taken the place of cooperation, rivalry that of love, and distrust that of trust and good faith.

The emergence of such fissiparous tendencies has marked the beginning of the decline of any great movement. Unless checked, they multiply and lead ultimately to serious rifts and divisions. The original goal is completely forgotten in the heat of controversy and debate, and the purpose we set out to achieve lies wholly neglected. If we are to escape this fate we must zealously watch ourselves, and rid ourselves of any undesirable traits that may be imperceptibly developing in us.

Why such disharmony should keep up is not difficult to tell. The Master cannot be present in his physical person everywhere and at all times. His mission must be carried on with the assistance of his disciples. These disciples are individuals inspired by spiritual longings, who have been put on the road, but who have not necessarily reached the goal. The ultimate end is not easy to attain, and very few indeed reach it within this lifetime. The Master's Cause must, therefore, be carried on with the aid of men and women who, in most cases, are yet on the path and have not attained perfection. Their vision is individual, not universal, and the viewpoint from which they see and judge is limited by the degree of spiritual development attained by them. When they

are entrusted with any responsibility it is inevitable that they should discharge it within the terms of their own vision and insight. And when in discharging this responsibility they have to collaborate with others like themselves, others whose viewpoint is equally individual and distinct, the roots of discord begin. So long as they work directly under the guidance of the Master, all is well, but the moment they have also to work in collaborating and cooperation, controversy begins. They should understand that they are all laborers in the field of the Master, working for promoting the Holy Cause of leading the seekers to the Goal of Life. The man who could see, could resolve at a touch the contradictory statements regarding the elephant made by the proverbial six blind men, but left to themselves, they could only wrangle and debate; each considered that he was right and the others wrong, and each distrusted what the others had to say.

If six men lacking full vision could not agree about the nature of so limited and well-defined an object as an elephant, it is not surprising that those with limited vision should be unable to harmonize completely on so vast and unlimited a subject as spirituality. And yet, while it is natural for those who lack full vision not to agree fully on such matters, we must not allow this limitation to create division and dissension. For if we fail to find a remedy, we will ultimately have to sacrifice the “Cause” which brought us together, and what a great loss that would be.

There is only one remedy for all such discord and that is Love. He, who has not mastered its secret, can never hope to be received in the Court of the Lord. It is the beginning and the end of spirituality. He who understands Love in its true nature and who lives and moves by its light shall, surely as two added to two makes four, attain the Lord.

Love and all things shall be added unto thee.

– CHRIST

*Listen! for I give you the very essence of truth:
Those who have loved have reached the Lord.*

– GURU GOBIND SINGH

Love knows selfless service, sacrifice, and self-surrender. Let no one interested in spiritual advancement perform service for the sake of appreciation. Selfless service is great reward in itself. It even sacrifices one's personal interests for the cause one has sincerely taken up.

What is this love, of which all mystics Eastern and Western, have spoken so insistently? Is it like the love of the earth that we know? If you study the bonds of earthly love, you will find that at some point or another a trace of self-assertion is present in every case. Parent and child, friend and friend, man and wife; each is involved in a more or less strong drive for possession. It is a love that can often rise to great heights of self-sacrifice, and yet it is a love that is not wholly selfless.

But the Love of which the mystics speak is a love that must be completely purified of the self. If one has not attained complete purification in this respect, one's love is still not perfect and not truly acceptable in the eyes of the Lord. And so the love of mystics is one in which one completely and unreservedly surrenders one's self to one's love. The seeker who, having found a true Master, has developed such absolute love for him, steadily purifies himself of all imperfections and makes himself a fit recipient of Divine Grace.

You may well ask why there is this insistent stress on complete self-surrender on the mystic path. The answer is simple: without this absolute surrender of the last vestiges of ego and selfhood, and without such complete absorption in the object of one's love, one cannot attain that unwavering concentration of all one's faculties which is the prerequisite of all inner progress. Absolute love and self-surrender are only other aspects of complete and flawless concentration. The moment the "self" enters into the picture and the question of "I-ness" arises, the single-pointedness of concentration is dissipated and inner advancement is made impossible. Besides, the goal of the spiritual aspirant lies far beyond the limits of individuality. His goal is union with the Absolute and such union must necessarily be a denial of the limits that separate us from each other. He who cannot rise above the ego, the faculty which creates these very limits, cannot hope to attain to that station which is the denial of all individuality and a realization of the oneness of all life.

Hence it is that mystics of all traditions have been untiring in their stress of the need for absolute self-surrender. It was this cross of sacrifice of the self, the ego, of which Jesus spoke when he exhorted his disciples to bear their cross daily. For in every little act, word or thought, the ego is seeking to dominate us, and if the seeker is to triumph over it, he must be prepared to crucify it every moment. To achieve this degree of self-surrender, one must not look up to the Deity in Its Abstract form but in Its human form as the Master. For how else is one to know God's Will directly, in order to surrender one's self to it? What one may take as an intuition inspired by the Divine may be really one's own self speaking in disguise, and surrender to such seeming intentions may be really surrender to the self, the ego.

However, if one has found a true Master, who is attuned to the Lord and is His mouthpiece, and obeys Him in all things completely and absolutely, he will surely destroy the hydra-headed serpent of the ego, and reach his heavenly home one day. There will be moments in the course of such love when one, judging from one's own limited understanding, doubts the validity of the Master's instructions, but such moments are only tests to make our self-surrender more complete and more secure, and he who passes through these tests successfully, will one day radiate with the glory of God.

Such love and self-surrender to the Will of the Lord embodied in the Master, has been the keystone of the teachings of all mystics and especially so of

Sant Mat. Your main task as disciples, as initiates, is to cultivate these qualities to the very utmost and leave the rest to the Master. There will, of course, be moments of doubt and of questioning, but if you can pass through them with your love and your faith unscathed, you will find the spiritual road within steadily unfolding itself before you and all things being added unto you. The path is certainly not easy, but for one who has made such love the cornerstone of his life, nothing could be easier or more certain. Jesus never promised the peace and comfort with which the world is familiar. It was the cross he offered. We have to suffer; to reshape ourselves, to destroy the old and forge the new.

We have to face the ridicule of our fellows and the organized opposition of orthodox institutions. But if we have anchored ourselves in such a love of complete self-surrender, nothing can disturb the peace of our minds or distract the spiritual harmony that is ours. Initially, perhaps, it is easier in the East to take to the mystic path than it is in the West. There is in India, for example, a long standing tradition of seeking and following a Living Master; a tradition that is foreign to those to whom religion has been taught in terms of a closed revelation. Nevertheless, this initial advantage is not as great as it might at first appear. For the essential advantage in the field of spirituality is to be found not without but within. It lies not in the absence of outer opposition but in one's inner capacity for complete self-surrender and love; and outward obstacles may in fact act as tests

and stimuli for the development of this capacity. This ability to conquer the ego and to submit oneself to the Higher Will is as rare in the East as in the West, and wherever it can be found there you shall observe the true grandmark of spirituality.

It is this capacity that you must cultivate and develop if you really wish to make substantial progress in the spiritual field. I repeat that the path is not easy. You must crucify your ego and lay your selfhood at the altar of love for your Master. Rome was not built in a day and the True Abode of the Lord is not to be attained with a few weeks labor. Most seekers want quick results. They want miracles and sudden transformations. But the seed generates rapidly only in thin soil and then withers away. The seed that must grow into the life-giving tree must grow more slowly. The science of spirituality, as it has been taught by all Masters, and as it has been given to you, is a perfect science. Its truth has been demonstrated by some initial experience. The rest depends on your effort. The Divine Grace is ever ready to pour itself into the vessel, but the vessel must first be ready. The power to perform miracles is not very difficult to acquire, but it is not to be confused with true spirituality, which must be paid for with complete self-transformation and self-surrender.

This then is the task before you. If you aspire for spiritual salvation, then do not lose a moment in seeking to reform yourselves. Man making is the most difficult part of spirituality, and if you have

perfected yourself in that field, then God realization is not difficult. Let your love for the Master be absolute and your obedience to his wishes uncompromising. Work for His Cause to the best of your abilities, but do not let the individuality of your limited vision inculcate feelings of opposition and resentment for your fellows. So long as one has not attained universal consciousness, differences of opinion are bound to exist. But if one has understood their cause, one will not allow them to disturb one's peace of mind. Whatever the outer opposition, whatever the opinions of others, if one has surrendered oneself completely to one's love, then nothing can ever disturb one's equanimity or obstruct one's spiritual course. He who is upset by what others have to say is, without question, one who is still controlled by the ego and has yet to conquer his self. He has yet to learn the rudiments of spirituality.

Let me therefore, command you as a Father, exhort you as a Teacher, persuade you as a Friend, to turn to the reformation and conquest of the self if you seek to progress on the inner path. Try to help others and do the best for them, but be not concerned with the fruits of what you do. That is something that you must leave to the Master. Make your love for Him so complete that, beholding His Hand in everything, you rise above all feelings of enmity, rivalry and resentment. See Him present in all and remember that He is always with you, ready to assist whenever you turn your thoughts to Him. And above all do not forget that He is to be won not by words but by deeds:

“If you love me follow my commandments.” If you can do this; if you can conquer the self and surrender it at the Feet of the Master; if you can learn to see Him working through all things; if you can accept the fact of your own limited vision; if you can undertake a ceaseless and zealous watch over your thoughts and deeds, weeding out all evils and imperfections – then you shall not only win salvation yourselves but enable others to do likewise. Your example shall shine like a torch in the darkness, and men, even those who may first oppose you, will turn to you for guidance and help. You will find a new sense of peace surging through you, a peace that does not depend on the absence of outer disturbances, but is an inner state of mind that stands unshaken even in the most tempestuous situations. And this same quality shall enter not only your individual lives, but the larger life of the Great Spiritual movement of which you are a part. Instead of being disrupted and divided, it shall proceed single and purposeful toward its goal.

No true Master has ever been interested in attracting large numbers to Himself; and quantity has never been my aim. It is quality that counts and I would rather have a handful of disciples, nay even one, who can sacrifice their ego on the spiritual altar and learn to live by love, than millions who understand not the value and meaning of these virtues. I have suggested this before, and I emphasize this again that a seeker should be studied more carefully and his/her background learned more before being recommended for initiation. If, after understanding

the basic principles of the science, he is willing to undertake this complete remolding of himself that its practice requires, then and then alone, can he become a fit recipient of initiation. And how much more is this need for self-transformation to be stressed in the case of group leaders and representatives. They are the foundations of the movement, and if the foundations are weak, how shall the superstructure stand firmly? Their responsibility is much greater and their effort must be much greater than that of the ordinary initiate. If they really loved me more than their little selves; if they only knew how deeply I suffer when I see them divided and wrangling, they would never have permitted matters to come to such a pass. I am not happy to say this, but I am left no choice.

The chief element that results in disharmony between the representatives, group leaders and other initiates can also be traced to the word “distrust” or some sort of fear that some of them have acquired certain powers; viz., mind-reading or seeing or listening in on others at a distance, or psychic dominance over others, etc., which they misuse. If any one misuses such powers, those are taken away by the Master immediately. Moreover, they are armed with the repetition of five names by which they have no cause to fear anyone.

Take it as an exhortation, take it as a command, but from this day, this very moment, make love and self-surrender (and the two, as I have already said, are really one) the cornerstones of your life. Do this and you will find your life becoming daily a blessing. I am

always with you, waiting for you to turn away from yourselves and towards me. Let not the light that has been planted in you become darkness, but let it flame forth into a blaze that shall illumine the world. The path is strait and narrow and difficult, very difficult and exacting, but for one who is truly willing, every help is promised, and he can attain the goal in this very life; a goal that sets all other goals to shame; for beside it there are no goals at all, but empty baubles and toys, at best halfway houses.

I know the initiates abroad are anxious to see me in person, and I also long to be amidst them. You can well imagine how happy and jolly a father would feel amidst his sons and daughters who are all loving and amicable. I would, therefore, suggest that by the time I make a trip to America, all initiates, including leaders and representatives, make a special effort to live a pure, Christly and Master-like life as is possible, so that all initiates will stand out amongst other men and women shining with love in full bloom, and drenched in the sweet remembrance of the Lord.

Source: *Sat Sandesh* August 1970

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